



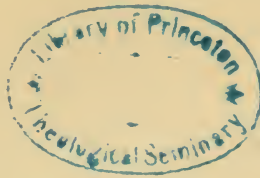
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The Bible : Its Structure and Purpose

✓ BY
JOHN URQUHART

Member of the Society of Biblical Archaeology
Associate of the Victoria Institute

AUTHOR OF

"The New Biblical Guide," "The Wonders of Prophecy"
"The Inspiration and Accuracy of the Holy Scriptures"
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The Bible : Its Structure and Purpose

GENESIS X. 1—L. 26.

THE preceding volume closed with our study of the Scripture account of the old world's destruction by the Flood. Its ending consequently coincided with one of the great dividing lines in the history of our race. We now take up the story of the new humanity; its re-planting in the earth, its increase, and its arrogance; its dispersion and separation. But while this plague of sin blights every hope from humanity, God hastens the day of full salvation, when the scattered will be made one family again, and the sin-stained earth will be cleansed. Abraham is chosen, and the story of Genesis becomes the history of Israel. The close connection of the various Parts of the Book, and its marvellous unity, will be further disclosed as we proceed.

SECTION V.

THE GENERATIONS OF THE SONS OF NOAH.

GENESIS X. 1—XI. 9.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONTENTS.

IN the ethnological table, found only in this tenth chapter of Genesis, the Bible once more shows itself to be the Book of humanity. "The object of this Table," says Dr. Driver, "is partly to show how the Hebrews supposed the principal nations known to them to be related to each other, partly to assign Israel, in particular, its place among them."* If that is so, excessive pains must have been taken to conceal the writer's purpose. For there is no mention whatever of Israel, nor even the remotest apparent reference to it. The nations are settled "in their lands;" and not only is no place assigned to Israel among them, but there is not even the faintest indication that any place is reserved for her. She is not brought, in any way, before the view of the reader. Shem is indeed set forth as "the father

* *Genesis*, p. 112.

of all the children of Eber" (x. 21); but, while Eber is spoken of as the ancestor of the numerous tribes of the Joktanites, there is no record in this genealogy of a single descendant of Peleg, in whose line Abraham and his posterity are afterwards to appear.

The attempt to dispute the genuinely cosmopolitan character of this part of the Book may be taken as an indication of the vital bearing which the presence of this genealogical table has upon the claims of Genesis and of the Bible. For that, even if it stood alone, would give the Bible a unique place in the world's literature. To say that no other book contains the information which is here preserved is not an adequate statement of the truth. The brotherhood of man, which is here so clearly taught, was a conception entirely foreign to classic antiquity. We may, with perfect truth, go further, and say that the spirit of ancient literature was utterly opposed to any such conception. Nowhere, too, were national views so narrow, or national prejudices so deeply-rooted and so strong, as among the Jews themselves. Yet, nevertheless, among that very people a Book is produced, to which no taint of this bitter anti-foreign spirit clings; which follows and records the settlements of the Gentile nations with a sympathy nothing less than Divine; and which still teaches, as no other book is able to teach, that the foreigner, and even the savage, is our brother-man. If this Book is of merely human origin, how shall we explain that it came from the Jew; and, above all, how it is the one Book which has ever taught the

4 Genesis—SECTION V.—x. 1—xi. 9.

unity of the human race? That is a fact which the higher criticism ought not to ignore, and which it certainly ought not to misrepresent.

In a few words, which are a marvel of combined directness, simplicity, and brevity, the Scripture sets before us the first settlements of the nations. To the general reader this is necessarily, at first sight, a mere list of names, which interest us only on account of their appearing in the great Charter of human brotherhood. Modern discovery has invested them, however, with unexpected interest. The descendants of Japheth begin the list. These form, in all, fourteen peoples. These seven are the sons of Japheth:—

Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

From two of these the following peoples proceeded:—

FROM GOMER:

Ashkenaz.
Riphath.
Togarmah.

FROM JAVAN:

Elishah.
Tarshish.
Kittim.
Dodanim.

These form an additional seven, which, together with the original branches of the Japhetic family, make in all fourteen peoples.

The next family taken is that of Ham. We have here, first of all, four divisions, each descended from one of those four sons of Ham—(1) Cush, (2) Mizraim, (3) Phut, and (4) Canaan. From three of these four divisions of the Hamite family there sprang other heads of nations:—

FROM CUSH :	FROM MIZRAIM :	FROM CANAAN :
(5) Seba.	(10) Ludim.	(17) Sidon.
(6) Havilah.	(11) Anamim.	(18) Heth.
(7) Sabtah.	(12) Lehabim.	(19) the Jebusite.
(8) Raamah.	(13) Naphtuhim.	(20) the Amorite.
(9) Sabtechah.	(14) Pathrusim.	(21) the Girgasite
	(15) Casluhim.	(22) the Hivite.
	(16) Caphtorim.	(23) the Arkite.
		(24) the Sinite.
		(25) the Arvadite.
		(26) the Zemarite.
		(27) the Hamathite.

From two of those named in this second list three peoples were derived :—

FROM RAAMAH :	FROM CASLUHIM :
(28) Sheba.	(30) Philistim.
(29) Dedan.	

These make, in all, thirty peoples, as against the fourteen of Japheth. The Hamite family, it is evident, spread rapidly. It promised to be the leading division of humanity. That a final supremacy of this kind was anticipated is shown from the action of one member of the Cushite family. Nimrod is not the founder of a people who perpetuate his name ; but he is the first conqueror and king. There is more in the eighth and ninth verses than meets the eye in the English Version. The words are:—

“And Cush begat Nimrod : he began to be a *gibbor* in the earth. He was a *gibbor* hunter in the presence of Jehovah. Therefore it is said : ‘As Nimrod the *gibbor* hunter in the presence of Jehovah.’”

6 Genesis—SECTION V.—x. 1—xi. 9.

The reader will recall the former mention of the *gibbōrīm*, those “strong,” “impetuous,” men who began to place their yoke upon the necks of their fellows in the days before the Flood. Before the days of those men there had been authority, but it was the authority of right and of recognised law. By them right and law had been trampled under foot. This was a revival of the antediluvian despotism. The first of these imitators in the new world of the ancient tyranny was Nimrod: “He *began* to be a *gibbōr* in the earth”—that is, he was the first of the new race to repeat the ancient outrages upon humanity, and to assume a usurped authority over his fellow-men. The force of the additional term, “hunter,” will now be appreciated. Nimrod was not content to assert his authority over the men by whom he was more immediately surrounded. He became the first organiser of war. He assembled, armed, and trained his hosts; and, without any call save that of selfish ambition, he extended his conquests. It is probable that the translation which is generally approved, and which is adopted by the Revised Version, is correct; although the Authorised Version has grammatically more in its favour:

“Out of that land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and Rehoboth-
Ir, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh
and Calah (the same is a great city)” (verses
12, 13).

And these first conquests of the new world, as all conquests since, were made by the sword. Men’s

blood was poured out in defiance of the one law reiterated by God as the new humanity just left its refuge and passed down to re-inherit the earth. "At the hand of every man's brother," said Jehovah, "will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man" (ix. 5, 6). Notwithstanding that solemn announcement, Nimrod hunted his fellow-men, and subdued them with the sword. But he did it "in the presence of Jehovah," every jot and tittle of whose Word will have their full accomplishment.

The descendants of Shem are named last. Those of his immediate posterity who became founders of peoples were five: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. From two of these other peoples sprang.

FROM ARAM:

- (6) Uz.
- (7) Hul.
- (8) Gether.
- (9) Mash.

FROM ARPHAXAD:

- (10) Salah.

From Salah sprang (11) Eber; from Eber (12) Peleg, and (13) Joktan. From Joktan proceeded (14) Almodad, (15) Sheleph, (16) Hazarmaveth, (17) Jerah, (18) Hadoram, (19) Uzal, (20) Diklah, (21) Obal, (22) Abimael, (23) Sheba, (24) Ophir, (25) Havilah, (26) Jobab. These, it will be observed, amount to 26 peoples of the Shemites, which, along with the 14 of the Japhetic and the 30 of the Hamitic, nations, amount in all to 70.

The progress of chemistry and of astronomy has

8 Genesis—SECTION V.—x. 1—xi. 9.

been marked by the discovery of fixed numerical relationships between the chemical elements, as well as between the distances of the planets from the sun. There are many indications that numbers hold a similar place in Scripture. But here, as in natural science, we must be careful to keep closely to ascertained facts, and to resist being carried away by our own, or others', fancies. The numbers seven and ten seem to be used, the first as indicating the fulfilment of a Divine plan (as in the Creation), and the second completed human development (as in the ten generations before the Flood). What the multiplying of the two may signify is not so clear. But there is another seventy in the Scripture, which, in contrast with that of these seventy nations, has long attracted the attention of Bible students. The Book of Zohar (quoted by Lightfoot in a note on Luke iii. 36), says: "Seventy souls went down with Jacob into Egypt, that they might restore the seventy families dispersed by the confusion of tongues." This has a better Scripture foundation than most Jewish comments. The reader will remember that special attention is drawn to the number of the sons of Jacob who went down to Egypt. "All the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten" (Genesis xli. 27); "And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls" (Exodus i. 5); and again: "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons" (Deuteronomy x. 22).

Light is thrown upon the Divine purpose in these

references to the number of Israel by another passage in Deuteronomy (xxxii. 8, 9): "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." The dividing of the nations is, therefore, connected with Israel's place as God's selected people, in the great scheme of the world's redemption. Are we able to discover in what the connection consisted? Was there anything connected with that incident in Israel's history which could lead to such special emphasis being laid upon the number 70? A moment's reflection will suggest a reply. Israel—the nation from which the world's redemption was to spring—was then passing down to the land of affliction; and they entered "the fiery furnace" *a man for a nation*. The numerical correspondence gave thus one more utterance to the great truth of substitution. It declared that this people was to be connected with the nations by the link of vicarious suffering; and that through such suffering the promise to Abraham would reach its fulfilment: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

The bearing of all this upon another question will be apparent by-and-bye; but, meanwhile, let us return to the remaining contents of the Section. Before this part of the history can close, a somewhat urgent question must have a reply. Hitherto the human race had been dwelling together as one family.

What, then, broke up the great brotherhood of man? What was it that dispersed it and formed the nations? It is evident that the narrative, which has traced the rise and progress of primeval humanity, could not conclude without saying by what great convulsion those deep and permanent divisions, which have long divided humanity, were made. The first nine verses of chapter xi. supply the explanation, and thus complete the Section.

“And the whole earth was of one lip and one in words. And it came to pass, that, when they had departed from the east, they found a broad plain in the land of Shinar; and they settled there. And they said each man to his neighbour: ‘Come, let us make bricks, and let us burn them thoroughly.’ And they had brick for stone, and they had bitumen for mortar. And they said: ‘Come, let us build for us a city and a tower, whose head (shall be) in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.’”

We are here told that hitherto nothing had arisen to divide the one family of man, vast though it had now become. “The whole earth was of one lip”—that is, there was no difference in pronunciation; and they were also “one in words,” each thing had for all humanity but one name, and each act was denoted by one expression. But although there was no threatening from this side of approaching division, they were nevertheless possessed by a dread of coming

separation. The command of God to pass out and to possess the earth implied the breaking up of this grand unity. Their increasing numbers suggested also that, unless special precautions were taken, disruption and separation could not be long delayed. Hence sprang the proposal to build a great central city, which they might inhabit or camp around. But they were also disturbed by another fear. Vast as their life-span was, they knew the doom which lay upon humanity. Those mighty fathers of the race would die and be forgotten. Their long tenure of power lent a terror to the thought of oblivion, perhaps inconceivable to us now. Hence the plea for the second project—"Let us build for us . . . a tower, whose head shall be in the heavens; and let us make a name for ourselves." This tower was to be so stupendous, that never another which human hands might rear should transcend it; and their purpose in erecting it was to prolong their memory down through coming generations. They were really setting themselves to defeat God's purpose in the colonising of the lands, and also to ensure their immortality in spite of death, which God had decreed should humble and chasten the rebellious heart of sinful man.

We are now informed how their counsel was turned into foolishness.

"And Jehovah descended to see the city and the tower which the sons of men builded. And Jehovah said, Behold, the people is one, and all have one lip; and this is (but) the be-

12 Genesis—SECTION V.—x. 1—xi. 9.

ginning of their action. And now they will not be restrained from anything, which they purpose to do. Come, let us descend, and there confound their lip, so that no man may understand the lip of his neighbour. And Jehovah dispersed them from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they ceased to build the city. Therefore was its name called Babel; because Jehovah had there confounded (*bālal*) the lip of all the earth: and from thence Jehovah had dispersed them upon the face of the whole earth."

In the above translation the word "lip" (*sāphāh*) has been retained, so that the statement made by the Scripture might be evident. The first separation of the languages was a difference not in words, but in pronunciation. This will be referred to again. Meanwhile Dr. Driver's comment upon the passage may be noted. Its significance will be recognised when it is remembered that students in theological halls and colleges will henceforth be regarded as not fully instructed in Genesis, who have not studied and assimilated Dr. Driver's book. The "us" in the words, "Let us descend," he explains by a reference to his comment on iii. 22, where we are told that the "us" refers to "the class of Divine beings to which Jehovah also belongs."* That is, the pure Word of God is stained with the errors of heathenism! Even an ordinary desire to really comprehend the

* *Genesis*, p. 50.

language of Genesis would have rejected that interpretation. For it could not possibly be forgotten that it is only in one or two passages that the "us," as applied to God, occurs; while, if that heathenish conception had really belonged to the Book, it could not possibly have been confined to those few instances. If to the writer of Genesis Jehovah were only one of several, or many, Divine beings, as Dr. Driver would have us believe, that conception would meet us everywhere; and Genesis, instead of being distinguished by its glorious monotheism, would have been disfigured, like all other ancient literature, by a grotesque and incredible polytheism. If anything could add to the enormity of this attempt to shut the reader up to such a conception of Genesis, it would be the fact that a Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, should write as if neither he nor his readers had ever heard of the doctrine of the Trinity. That doctrine, which is not only published in the New Testament, but which is also imbedded in the Old, removes the difficulty. The only trace left of it would be a stimulating inquiry. The serious student of the Scripture can hardly avoid asking whether those few passages in which the plural appears have to do with any special manifestation of the Triune Jehovah.

But Dr. Driver is not content with merely setting aside the above explanation as unworthy of mention. He goes farther in his attempt to prove that Genesis is marred by idolatrous conceptions. Referring to verses 6 and 7, he writes: "It seems probable from the terms of verse 7—'let us go down'—that words

after verse 5 have been omitted, and that the narrative originally told how Jehovah returned to His lofty abode, and addressed the words which now follow as verses 6, 7, to the inferior Divine beings there, His heavenly counsellors or associates.”* This is an example of how everything is forced to bow to the unbridled fancies of the critic. He has concluded that the heathenish conception is there. That his conclusion is not supported, or is even contradicted, by the context does not trouble him. Such obstacles are brushed aside with lofty contempt. The narrative has, of course, been re-arranged to conceal the fact which he has detected! But the critic must deal with the fact already mentioned. If Genesis is the outcome of idolatrous thought, how has its expression been confined to one or two confessedly obscure passages? Why has not every other reference to the Deity been cast in the same heathenish mould? If the critics were right, then polytheism would have met the eye on every page of the Book. But, on the contrary, its every fibre is steeped in the rejoicing recognition of the only living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. There is not another Book of the Bible that witnesses more clearly than this to the unity and the unapproachable majesty of Jehovah. When dealing, therefore, with these words, “Let us go down,” etc., we are compelled to look for some other explanation than that which has been so eagerly adopted by Dr. Driver and his fellow critics.

The Higher Criticism and Genesis X. 15

The explanation has been already given in a former work,* and a word will here suffice. The representation belongs to the typology of Scripture. There are only three passages in the whole of the Old Testament in which God is represented as "coming down," or "descending," to see things done upon the earth. These are (1) this record of God's judgment upon the new humanity; (2) the judgment of Sodom and of Gomorrah (Genesis xviii. 21); and (3) the judgments upon Egypt in the deliverance of Israel (Exodus iii. 8). All these are typical of the final judgments upon the nations and the final deliverance of God's people, which the prophecies, both of the Old Testament and of the New, have set forth so fully. And, strange to say, this very representation regarding "coming down" is repeated in the predictions of the New Testament: "For the Lord Himself SHALL DESCEND from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1. Thessalonians iv. 16).

CHAPTER II.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM AND GENESIS X.

THE attitude of the higher criticism to this part of the Scripture, as shown in Gunkel and Driver, its latest German and English representatives, is sadly significant. It did not demand much insight to discern from the first that the higher

* *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., pp. 8, 9.

criticism was the antagonist, and not the servant, of the Scripture. But the imputation was indignantly repudiated. The critic claimed the honour of being the only real interpreter of the Bible, and of placing it upon a foundation where no one could thenceforth successfully assail it.

Of late years, however, there has been a rapid spiritual decline; and it makes itself specially manifest here. Dillmann cordially acknowledged the uniqueness of the Scripture account of the affiliation of the nations. "The fundamental idea of the survey," he wrote, "is to point out the ultimate relationship of all these peoples. This idea is important. Other ancient peoples too, after they had reached a certain stage of culture, found themselves obliged to turn away their gaze from their immediate surroundings to what was more remote. Egyptians and Phœnicians, Assyrians and Babylonians, even Indians and Persians, had thus a certain measure of geographical and ethnological knowledge, before more strictly scientific investigations had begun among the classical peoples. From several of these, such as the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians, surveys or enumerations of the peoples known to them, and attempts at maps, have come down to us in the written memorials they have left behind. But not much attention was paid, as a rule, to foreigners, unless national or trade interests were at stake. Often enough they were despised as mere barbarians, *and in no case were they included with the more cultured nation in a higher unity.*

It is otherwise in our text. Here many with whom the Israelites had no sort of actual relationship are taken into consideration. The purpose of this is characteristic, namely, to make known what position Israel takes in the whole circle of the nations. According to it Israel is still only one member of the whole mass of mankind. All men and peoples are of the same race, of the same rank, and with the same destiny (chapters i. 26, ix. 6), brothers and relatives to one another."*

But years have passed since Dillmann published his edition of Knobel's Genesis, and these years have ripened the fruits of the higher criticism as well as the fruits of other things. "How," asks Gunkel, "is the table of nations to be judged? The first impression made upon the modern unprejudiced reader must be in the highest degree strange and, indeed, laughable. It is as if we should say: 'Germany begat Saxony, Suabia,' &c.; 'Saxony begat Hanover,'" etc. "We understand what is meant: the relationship and the distribution of the peoples. But the form in which this is expressed appears to us extremely wonderful. Peoples are here regarded as persons, national connections as family connections: to each people an ancestor is ascribed. . . . This point of view appears to us moderns marvellously grotesque. . . . The theory lying at the foundation of the entire system," he continues, "is thoroughly wrong. We moderns . . . observe instead that peoples arise from the mixing together of

*Genesis, vol. i., p. 314.

older peoples. But as to how the primeval peoples arose in prehistoric time there is no historical tradition—Hebrew antiquity, too, is separated by endless time from these early beginnings—and hardly a historical theory; for wherever man appears he is already a member of a people. And the family, too, does not precede the people, or State; rather, both are ever together in one mould. The people consists of families; and the family cannot exist apart from the larger combination which protects it.”*

He also describes the Scripture narrative as “a childish theory”; but the phrase might, with much better warrant, be applied to the statement with which the preceding extract closes. He says that the family cannot exist apart from the larger population which protects it. We fail to see the slightest justification for such a statement. He might as well say that a tiny settlement, consisting at the outset of a mere hamlet, could not exist without a large surrounding population to protect it; and, nevertheless, we know that great communities have sprung from settlements of that very kind, even in modern times. There is also one comparatively recent instance on record of an island being populated by the increase of a single family. The position taken by Gunkel is, nevertheless, wholly accepted by Dr. Driver, who says: “In relating the nations to each other, each is represented as summed up in a corresponding eponymous ancestor, these being related to each other as father, son, brother, &c. The names are in no case

*Genesis, pp. 75, 76.

to be taken as of real individuals: they just represent peoples. This is clear in many cases from the names themselves . . . in other cases, from its being contrary to all analogy for the names of nations to be derived from those of known individual ancestors. Moreover, the real origin of the nations enumerated here, belonging in many cases to entirely different racial types—Semites, Aryans, Hittites, Egyptians—must have reached back into a remote prehistoric age—far earlier than B.C. 2500—from which, we may be sure, not even the dimmest recollections could have been preserved at the time when the chapter was written. The nations and tribes existed: and imaginary ancestors were afterwards postulated for the purpose of exhibiting pictorially the relation in which they were supposed to stand toward one another.”*

I need not trouble the reader with any further quotation to show Dr. Driver's position. His friends assert that he believes fully in the inspiration of the Bible. The reader will know what to think of that assertion, if he asks himself how a statement can be inspired that is not even true; and what belief in the inspiration of Genesis can be retained by the theological students who have to receive the above as the last word of science regarding the nature and the claims of the Bible. We shall now inquire whether “the ascertained results” of genuine science are in accord with these fantasies of the higher criticism.

* *Genesis*, p. 112.

CHAPTER III.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

THE tenth chapter of Genesis is the charter of humanity. It secures to each human being his or her place in the great brotherhood of man, and the right which pertains to that brotherhood of an interest in the gifts and the promises of God. We might insist upon the fact that, by placing this charter on its opening pages, the Bible thereby declared itself to be a Book for all nations and for every individual human being. That declaration was made, even according to the critics' lowered dates, more than two thousand and three hundred years ago! Who was then able to foresee this destiny of the Bible? And what Mind conceived the idea of the unity and brotherhood of man when that truth was hid from the wisest of the world's teachers?

But we are met by the question whether it is true. While referring the reader to the minute and extended reply which he will find elsewhere,* let me here also emphasize the fact that this doctrine of the Bible—that man has sprung from one family, from one home, and from one wedded pair—is now regarded as being in complete accord with the results of scientific investigation. "The opinion," says Tylor, "of modern Zoologists, whose study of the

* *The New Biblical Guide* vol. I., pp. 381-426.

species and breeds of animals makes them the best judges, is against this view of several origins of man, for two principal reasons. First, that all tribes of men, from the blackest to the whitest, the most savage to the most cultured, have such general likeness in the structure of their bodies and the working of their minds, as is easiest and best accounted for by their being descended from a common ancestry, however distant." The second reason is that all human races may intermarry. "This again," he adds, "points to a common ancestry of all the races of man."*

Dr. Driver, while apparently hinting his own doubt of the fact, admits that science is here at one with the Bible. He confesses that "modern anthropologists . . believe" that the nations "ultimately had a common origin." The greatest exponents of Science, such as Buffon, Cuvier, Camper, Blumenbach, Prichard, Serres, Tiedemann, Flourens, Quatrefages, who have made this question a special study, have all along concluded that, notwithstanding differences in colour, &c., it is impossible to deny the essential unity of the human race. But when this is admitted, a very serious difficulty is created for Dr. Driver and his friends. For it is equally undeniable that no other ancient writing contains a hint of this stupendous fact of the brotherhood of the nations. There is no mention of it in the classic literatures of Greece and Rome. Nor is it referred to in the ancient writings of India and of China. There is

* *Anthropology*, pp. 5, 6.

not the slightest indication of it in the inscriptions of Egypt, or in those of Persia, or Assyria, or Babylon. It stands on the Bible page alone. Place by the side of this—what completes the marvel—that science now declares the Bible statement to be true. Can the rationalist give any satisfactory explanation? Or will any explanation suffice which falls short of this—that the Bible is God's Book, and that the rest are the unaided productions of men?

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NATIONS.

THE higher criticism has identified itself from the outset with the theory of evolution. They are, both of them, the children of the time, and they have frankly acknowledged their brotherhood. The Scripture account is set aside as the product of an ignorant and unscientific age. The earth, these theories assure us, was not peopled in this way. Multitudes of men, or of beings not yet quite as the men of to-day, sprang into existence from the lower creation, by the operation of what is said to be a well-known law, but a law of whose action we have not one solitary, ascertained instance, either in the present or in the past. Those men, or half-men, it seems, gradually recognised their similarity; severely withdrew from their less fortunate

companions who retained their likeness to their brute ancestors; and herded together as separate groups. As ages passed, light gradually dawned upon them as to what was becoming and necessary for the establishment of order, and for laying securely the foundations of future progress. Among those becoming and necessary things was the evolution of the deep and sacred instincts which have created family life. These instincts were developed, more or less simultaneously, among all the groups of those part men part apes. The Bible, on the other hand, believing that men were always what they are now, pictures the race as having begun on the family foundation, and as having proceeded from one primeval home. That is, therefore, set aside as a notion quite "unthinkable" by "the scientific mind"; and it is set down among the proofs of the mythical character of Genesis.

We have already seen how real science has smitten these follies. Man, it tells us, can never have existed as a mere crowd; and that, notwithstanding the superficial differences which appeal so strongly to the unscientific mind, the facts show that all the races have sprung from a common ancestry. We have noted the significance of this. But the statements of the Bible are being day by day increasingly confirmed. This is specially true of the Scripture account of the origin of the nations. We are told, for example, of the spreading abroad of the Japhetic peoples. Their primeval settlements are named; but outside the Bible there was no record of any such common

origin and consequent relationship. Nevertheless, the confirmation of that Bible statement was that first triumph of Comparative Philology.* “Of no nation,” writes Professor Ernst Curtius,† “are the beginnings known to history. Its horizon is not entered by the nations of the earth till after they have already gained a peculiar form of their own, and have learnt to assert their individuality, as against neighbouring nations; but before that period has arrived, centuries have passed of which no man may count the succession. The science of language is no better able than her sister sciences to measure this prehistoric time: but to her alone belong the means of casting a light upon its obscurity; it is in her power to supplement the beginnings of history out of the most ancient documents of the life of nations; for in their languages a connexion of kinsmanship may be demonstrated between the most different peoples, otherwise linked to one another by no tradition or history.” When the comparative study of ancient and modern languages revealed the sisterhood of the Indo-European peoples, scholars were impressed with new respect for the Bible affiliation of the Japhetic nations.

And as Eastern researches proceed, the confirmations multiply. Dr. Driver asserts that Elam had certainly no direct racial connexion with Shem,‡ although Elam is distinctly asserted in the Scripture to have been Shem’s son (Genesis x. 22). Before

* See *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. i., p. 409, &c.

† *The History of Greece*, vol. i., pp. 17, 18.

‡ *Genesis*, p. 113.

Dr. Driver's book was published, research, having been enabled to go still farther back than earlier discoveries had taken it, declared that the early Elamitic people were Shemites.

"In the genealogies preserved in the Bible," writes Mr. Boscawen, "Elam is mentioned as Semitic (Genesis x. 22), together with Assyria. This classification is rather linguistic than ethnic, but recent discoveries have shown that the earliest Elamite inscriptions were modelled on those of Babylonia, and written both in Sumerian and Semitic Babylonian." * The fact of the Semitic being also used in these inscriptions is a plain intimation that the native population belonged to a Semitic race. The reader may judge from this instance of the scientific value of these critical denials.

And the statement of the Bible—that the family was first, and that the nation was afterwards formed from the multiplied families, though set aside by the critics, is amply confirmed by historical investigation. "Individual tribes," says Mommsen, "or in other words, races or stocks, are the constituent elements of the earliest history." † Max Duncker, in his *History of Antiquity*, sees in the family the germ whose after-developments constitute human history. The nations have been formed by the coalescing of the families, and by the rupture of family ties to meet national needs. He says: "When the original unity and society of life, which comprises all members of the family and of the tribe, have been

* *The First of Empires*, pp. 9, 10.

† *The History of Rome*, vol. i., p. 10.

broken through—when at the beginning of their settled life some have turned their attention to agriculture and cattle, others to hunting and war, others again to the fulfilment of religious duties—the sons are wont to carry on the vocation of the fathers. . . . In this way the tribes and the nation part into separate circles, which carry on as an inheritance the mode of life derived from their forefathers.” *

However far research is pushed into the depths of the past, the result is everywhere the same. Scripture statements are confirmed by the results of scientific investigation. Speaking of Egypt, in its oldest dynasties, Reginald Stuart Poole writes: “The centre of domestic life is the marriage law; more than this, it is the centre of civil and political life. The household is the microcosm of the State, and the orderly rule of individual households makes up the aggregate of a well-governed State.” †

“The effect of the evidence derived from comparative jurisprudence,” says Sir Henry Maine, “is to establish that view of the primeval condition of the human race which is known as the patriarchal theory. There is no doubt, of course, that this theory was originally based on the Scriptural history of the Hebrew patriarchs in Lower Asia; but . . . its connection with Scripture rather militated than otherwise against its reception as a complete theory, since the majority of the enquirers, who till recently addressed themselves with most earnestness to the

* English Edition, by Evelyn Abbot, vol. i., pp. 8, 9.

† “Ancient Egypt,” *Contemporary Review*, August, 1881, p. 288.

colligation of social phenomena, were either influenced by the strongest prejudice against Hebrew antiquities, or by the strongest desire to construct their system without the assistance of religious records. Even now there is perhaps a disposition to undervalue these accounts, or rather to decline generalising from them, as forming part of the tradition of a Semitic people. It is to be noted, however, that the legal testimony comes nearly exclusively from the institution of society belonging to the Indo-European stock, the Romans, Hindoos, and Slavonians supplying the greater part of it; and, indeed, the difficulty, at the present stage of the inquiry, is to know where to stop, to say of what races of men it is *not* allowable to lay down that the society in which they are united was originally organised on the patriarchal model. . . Men are first seen distributed in perfectly insulated groups, held together by obedience to the parent. . . When we go forward to the state of society in which these early legal conceptions show themselves as formed, we find that they still partake of the mystery and spontaneity which must have seemed to characterise a despotic father's commands. . . The next question is, what is the nature of the union and the degree of intimacy which it involves? It is just here that Archaic law renders us one of the greatest of its services, and fills up a gap which otherwise could only have been bridged by conjecture. It is full, in all its provinces, of the clearest indications that society in primitive times was not what it is assumed to be at

present, a collection of *individuals*. In fact, and in the view of the men who composed it, it was *an aggregation of families*. This contrast may be most forcibly expressed by saying that the *unit* of an ancient society was the Family, of a modern society the individual.”*

Still more recent investigation encounters similar facts. Messrs. John Rhys and David Brynmor Jones, describing the Welsh people as shown in the laws belonging to the tenth century of our era, say: “Looking at the system, as a whole, it must be described as still tribal. Political and property rights, as well as the status of individuals, depended upon a theory of blood relationship. The whole community is looked upon as an aggregate of tribes, or clans and families, forming a ruling aristocracy, under whom other classes of lower status are grouped.”†

Another recent writer bears similar testimony. “Students of comparative institutions,” he says, “have generally regarded the family as the unit or germ from which the higher forms of social organism have been evolved. A German scholar declares that among all the races of antiquity ‘the constitution of the family was the basis and prototype of the constitution of the State’ (Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer*, i., 1). The same theory is clearly set forth, and the process of political expansion carefully described by Plato, and also by Aristotle, who base it upon their own observation, both among ‘Hellenes and barbarians.’ . . . It is not wholly improbable, as

* *Ancient Law*, pp. 122-126.

† *The Welsh People*, p. 188.

will presently appear, that the family, in some form, must be accepted as the initial society, possibly among all the races of mankind." *

But in addition to these testimonies we have the patent and unquestionable fact that the family idea provided the earliest plan for national government. Our institutions have been formed in that mould. The King is the patriarch of his people. He is the one individual in whom are centred the father's sacred rights, and the attitude of the subject toward him is that of filial reverence. The family idea, therefore, is the basis of all national organization. The family must accordingly have preceded the nation, and have formed the first institution of humanity. Let me once more ask the reader to note these results. Gunkel describes the Scripture representation (which has from the outset enriched the household of faith with the truths now reached by scientific research) as "a childish theory"; and Driver quotes with approval Gunkel's explanation of the genealogies of Genesis as "due to the scientific necessity of saying something about the rise of other nations."† The blood-relationship of the nations is scouted, and the family-basis of all society, ancient and modern, is set aside as the product of an infantile fancy. Science, on the other hand, has now placed the brotherhood of man beyond doubt, and has found that society has sprung, as the Bible says it did, from the family.

* Geo. Elliott Howard. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (1904), vol. i., pp. 9, 10. † Driver, *Genesis* p. 112.

One more fact remains to be noted. At what point are we placed by that picture of the nations presented in Genesis x.? The record professes to describe *the first* settlements of the nations, and to carry us back, therefore, far beyond the 4th century B.C., when, according to the critics, Genesis was put together. It carries us even beyond the time of Moses himself—the 16th century B.C. Is this profession, then, borne out by the facts? Does the narrative really lift the curtain from the depths of that vast antiquity? We are fully aware what nations were known to a Jew in 400 B.C. Investigation has also shown what peoples would have been named by a writer in 1600 B.C., who was dependent for his information upon merely human sources. Now, it can be demonstrated that the arrangement of the nations in Genesis x. is neither that of one period nor that of the other. For example, the Persians were the dominant people of the East in 400 B.C.; but they find no place whatever in Gen. x.; and no writer of that period, drawing his information from the ordinary sources of his time, could possibly have left Persia out. When we ascend to the time of Moses we are met by facts of a similar kind. There are three peoples whom Israel is to encounter upon its way to Palestine—Amalek, Edom, and Moab—but of these also there is here no mention whatever. It is not, in short, the settlement of the nations when, according to the critics, Genesis was put together. Nor is it the settlement which an unaided writer would have given us in

the time of Moses himself. It is a picture painted by inspiration of the Spirit of God of the first settlements of our race. We are borne back to a time into which no merely human history can lead us; and that these words are, nevertheless, true, modern research has proved by showing that those races were connected as the Scripture here declares them to have been.*

*On Nimrod, see *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. I., pp. 426-449; on the Tower of Babel and Babylon, see *Guide*, vol. II., pp. 1-4.

SECTION VI.

THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM

GENESIS XI. 10—26.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONTENTS.

THIS sixth natural chapter of Genesis is one of the briefest. It contains only seventeen verses, and in none of them is any incident recorded that invests the Section with what we may describe as human interest. Though covering nearly seventeen centuries, they do not present even one solitary glimpse of the life of those ancient times.

The Section, however, brief and apparently uninteresting though it be, has as honoured a place in, and is as necessary to, the structure of the Book as any of the other ten. The apostle has reminded us that "God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked" (1. Corinthians xii. 24); and two things prove how the great Artificer has followed the like plan here. This is the golden bridge which connects Israel with the post-diluvian humanity. Abraham's lineage is traced up to Shem, and through him to Noah, the second father of mankind. These "genera-

tions of Shem " give us also the list of the selected ancestors of the Christ. From each of these generations of Shem's descendants one man is chosen, and to him, of all men of his time, is this honour given of taking a place among the fathers of the Messiah.

There can be little doubt that this genealogy, like that of the generations of Adam through Seth and those in Matthew i., is controlled by some symbolic law. The Evangelist draws our attention to there being three fourteens in the names which he records : one fourteen between Abraham and David ; the second from David to the Babylonian captivity ; and the third from the captivity to the birth of our Lord. The entire genealogy, therefore, from the time of the promise to Abraham to its fulfilment in Jesus, consists of six sevens. Similarly in the genealogy of these primeval ancestors of Jesus we note a like numerical law. There are ten from Adam to Noah, and from Shem to Abram there are also these ten :—

Shem.	Reu.
Arphaxad.	Serug.
Salah.	Nahor.
Eber.	Terah.
Peleg.	Abram.

I do not venture to give any opinion as to what these numbers signify. It is perhaps too early yet for certainty ; and I confine myself to noting that they are evidently used with symbolic intent. Another significant manifestation of the Divine wisdom lies in the fact that it is only in these two lists of the ancestors of the Christ that we find the Scripture reckonings which furnish the material for our Bible chronology.

There are no numbers in the list of the descendants of Japheth, or in that of the posterity of Ham. Even in the record of the ordinary descendants of Shem, numbers are equally lacking. It is only when we come to this series of the selected fathers of the Christ that numbers present themselves. With that fact and its important bearing upon a true Bible chronology we shall deal in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE.

THE more ancient chronology of Scripture rests solely upon two chapters in Genesis. These are the fifth, which contains the roll of the selected progenitors of the Christ from Seth to Noah; and the tenth, which has continued the record of these from Shem to Abraham. Apart from these two chapters, which are marked, as we shall immediately see, by very striking features, we have no means of numbering the years from the creation of man to the Flood, and from the Flood to the time of Abraham.

It might have been imagined, however, that with these two lists in our hands, there would be no possibility of dispute as to the age of man. But this is far from being the case. The transcriber of the Samaritan Pentateuch seems to have yielded to what was, no doubt, a strong temptation, and to have lengthened the period from Shem to Abraham by

about 1,000 years. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament made in Egypt in the third century B.C., lengthened the former period (from Adam to Noah) as well as the latter. These changes naturally raised a question as to whether the numbers given in the Hebrew text could be fully relied upon. It was suggested, and indeed contended, that the variations in the Septuagint and in the Samaritan indicated that anciently the numbers in the Hebrew text were different from those which we find in it now. The uncertainty thus created has naturally resulted in the production of many "sacred chronologies." Alphonse des Vignoles says, in the Preface to his *Chronology of Sacred History*: "I myself have collected more than 200 different calculations, the shortest of which reckons only 3,483 years from the creation of the world to the time of our Lord, and the longest gives it as 6,984. That is a difference of thirty-five centuries." * The following selection shows how widely these calculations differ. The Jews reckon that the world, or man rather, was created 3,761 B.C. Scaliger represents the same period as extending to 3,950 years; Ussher gives it as 4,004; Clinton, 4,138; Hales, 5,411; Jackson, 5,426. The system adopted by the Church of Alexandria makes it to be 5,504; the Church of Constantinople gives it as 5,540. Vossius reckons it to be 6,004; Panvinio, 6,311; and the Alphonsine Tables, 6,984.

There can be no doubt that these discordant

* Berlin, 1738.

36 Genesis—SECTION VI.—xi. 10—26.

results are quite as much due to external pressure as to the alleged uncertainty with regard to the original numbers contained in the Scripture. That pressure has always been felt. A brief review of the various competing chronologies may be necessary before we consider the Scripture statements. Berosus, or Berossus, a priest of Bel, at Babylon, in the 3rd century B.C., wrote a history of his people, which is now unfortunately lost, and is known to us only through references and quotations made by other ancient writers. He claimed that the first King of Babylon had reigned 467,581 years before Pul, or about 468,330 B.C. This vast space of time had been occupied by seven royal dynasties. The first consisted of ten kings, who reigned before the Deluge. Their united reigns lasted 432,000 years, which gave an average reign to each king of 43,200 years. The second dynasty embraced 86 kings, and endured for 34,080 years, the average reign in this dynasty being thus 396 years. The other five dynasties occupied 1,500 years; and the entire period from the Deluge to the Conquest of Babylon by Cyrus extended to about 36,000 years.

These enormous figures did not command the confidence of the learned in antiquity. Cicero said that we ought to condemn the Chaldeans for folly, or vanity, or impudence, or judge them to be falsifiers when they maintain that their monuments embrace a period of 470 thousand years.* But the Chaldeans were not alone in those pretensions. The Egyptian

* *De Divinat.* i., 19, 36.

priests consistently claimed for centuries a similar high antiquity for their own monarchy. It was the custom of the learned Greeks to visit Egypt, and to acquaint themselves with its renowned wisdom. The priests of Heliopolis told Solon that their kings had reigned for 8,000 years. Plato indicates in the *Timæus* that he had been similarly informed. He speaks of Egyptian painting and sculpture as going back to 10,000 years from his own time, and he states expressly that the number is to be taken literally. From this it seems as if the claims had risen somewhat with advancing time. Herodotus, who visited Heliopolis after the days of Solon, was told that the royal annals went back for 11,340 years.

In the history composed by Manetho, an Egyptian priest, about 300 B.C., the above figures were very largely exceeded. His work has also disappeared, and we are again indebted to other ancient authors, who quoted its statements.

His chronology, like that of Berosus, was in seven divisions :

1.	The reign of the gods	...	...	13,900 years
2.	" " " heroes	...	...	1,255 "
3.	Reigns of other kings	...	...	1,817 "
4.	" " thirty Memphites	...	...	1,790 "
5.	" " ten Thinites	...	...	350 "
6.	" " Manes and the heroes...	...	...	5,813 "
7.	" " thirty dynasties	...	...	5,000 "

In all ... 29,925 years

This reckoning consequently claims for the begin-

ning of the Egyptian monarchy an antiquity of more than 30,000 years before the commencement of the Christian era.

While the earlier part of the above table has been set aside by common consent, the 5,000 years claimed for the thirty dynasties of Egyptian kings has been largely accepted as historical. But, although his figures, which appear to have been given in great detail, have been of signal value to archæologists, it has been clearly shown that the total of 5,000 years can not be depended upon. Some of the dynasties were no doubt contemporaneous, the kings reigning in different parts of Egypt at the same time; but Manetho has reckoned them as if they had succeeded each other. He has followed the same method with the reigns of the individual kings. Thus he represented the reigns of Seti and his son, Rameses II., as extending to 121 years. But the monuments show that Rameses II. was co-regent with his father for a time, and that the combined reigns embraced only seventy-seven years. This makes a difference of forty-four years, or nearly half a century, on those two reigns alone. In thirty-seven cases, where the Turin Papyrus has enabled us to test his figures, it is found that, while he assigns 984 years to these thirty-seven reigns, the correct period was only 615.

The conflict between the Scripture Chronology and other systems has not yet ceased. I say nothing of the large drafts upon time made by the Chinese and the Indian reckonings. Their chronologies have long ago crumbled away under investigation. But

from every department, in which modern science deals with the duration of human life upon the earth, contemptuous glances are thrown upon the modest figures of the Bible. The evolutionist demands a practically unlimited past for the slow development of the human form: and he needs it. For, if 6,000 years show not the slightest change in the structure of the human body, an eternity itself would hardly provide a sufficiently extended duration to evolve man from the ape, not to speak of the development of the ape from the monad.

Another claim for practically unlimited time is based upon the slow development of civilization. "The monuments of Babylonia and Egypt," writes Mr. Tylor, "show that towards 5,000 years ago certain nations had come to an advanced state of culture. . . The ancient Egyptians had that greatest mark of a civilized nation, the art of writing. . . . They were a nation skilled in agriculture. . . . How numerous and how skilled in constructive art the ancient Egyptians were, is seen by every traveller who looks on the pyramids, which have made their name famous through all history. . . . Thus it appears that civilization, at the earliest dates where history brings it into view, had already reached a level which can only be accounted for by growth during a long prae-historic period."* This argument is marked by Mr. Tylor's usual moderation; but it is, nevertheless, one upon which too much reliance may be placed. It assumes that man began

* *Anthropology*, pp. 21-23.

as a savage. He found himself, it is imagined, with his feet upon the earth, and the lowest rung of the ladder of civilization one step above him. What it was that led *him*, of all living creatures, to suppose that his way lay up there is not explained. In other words, why there should be progress in the midst of humanity and nowhere besides is a matter that is not taken into account. If it were, customary arguments would necessarily assume a different form. For, if God created man with so much higher a destiny than that of the brutes, is it to be supposed that He would leave man upon the level of the brute creation? Does not the Divine procedure lead us to expect rather that man would have been placed at once upon the higher level which he was intended to occupy and to adorn? The testimony of Scripture is, that man did begin his career there: and the most recent researches into the distant past confirm the Scripture; for they find man in the enjoyment of the highest civilization which the earth has ever seen. Besides, too, the argument is defective when viewed upon other sides. While man's descent to the savage condition is always slow, ascent is often rapid. This is shown in the sudden development of Japan, and in the marked, and comparatively recent, advances of modern Europe. There is no time-scale for such progress. We know what science was in the days of Aristotle and of Pliny, and we know where it stood in the 15th century of our era. Let us suppose that we used the scale, furnished by those nearly 2,000 years, to reckon the period required for

the evolution of the science of to-day from that of the 15th century. Would it be quite safe to reason as anthropologists so confidently do reason with regard to the past, and to multiply that interval of 2,000 years, say by fifteen or thirty, to allow for the evolution of the science of the 20th century? That would give us from thirty to sixty centuries for a period which does not cover five.

The claim made by geology, in regard to the antiquity of man, is well known. G. de Mortillet has said: "Man, having appeared at the commencement of Quaternary time, has existed for 220,000 years. To this have to be added the more than 6,000 historic years to which the monuments of Egypt lead us back, and 12,000 years which, very probably, have elapsed between geological time and what we know of Egyptian civilisation. This gives us, then, a total of from 230,000 to 240,000 years for the antiquity of man."* We have been long accustomed to various versions of that verdict. The figures assigned have varied much; but, compared with the most moderate of them all, the period indicated by the Scripture dwindles into insignificance. The time-scale of the geologist has proved, however, to be still less reliable than that of the anthropologist. Experiments, made some years ago, have shown that from seven to twelve thousand years from the present time is amply sufficient to cover the period which has elapsed since the close of the Ice Age and the appearance of man upon the earth.

* *Le préhistorique antiquité de l'homme* (1883), p. 627.

It is a matter for astonishment that one question has not hitherto intruded itself into these discussions. How has it happened that the Bible has stood so utterly alone in this matter? We are now told repeatedly that the Scripture could not have been expected to escape the errors of its time; and that, as a matter of fact, it did not escape them. In that strange compound, which can be fitly described only by its title, *Babel and Bible*, Friedrich Delitzsch, referring to the achievements of the higher criticism, says: "These are facts that, as far as science is concerned, stand firm and remain unshaken, however tightly people on either side of the ocean may continue to close their eyes to them"; and then adds, as showing the indebtedness of the Bible to Babylonian teaching: "The ten Babylonian antediluvian kings also have been admitted into the Bible, and figure as the ten antediluvian patriarchs, with various points of agreement as to details."* But why, then, did not the Bible incorporate the huge figures of the Babylonian chronology? In a matter of that kind an uninspired pen would have been peculiarly dependent upon tradition; and, if Genesis had been composed under Babylonian influence, that influence would necessarily have left one of its deepest impressions here. But there is not the faintest trace of any. The Scripture steps out from the midst of all these inflated chronologies, and gives us those figures, which were the astonishment of ancient times, as they are the astonishment of our own.

* Pages 46, 47.

How can we explain this? Only in one way, it seems to me. Those ancient traditions of Babylon, of Egypt, of China, and of India, as well as the wild computations of anthropologists and geologists, indicate the limits of human ability. We are as impotent in regard to the past as we are in regard to the future. Confronted by that long dim vista of past ages, and asked to measure it, we can only reply with guesses; and we are as prodigal of centuries and of millenniums as a spendthrift of his money. Now, if the Scripture is indeed inspired, then both past and future stand forth as clearly under the eye of God as the present; and we may expect here also perfect insight and absolutely accurate history. That the enormous figures of Babylonian and Egyptian tradition do not burden the page of Scripture, certainly favours the belief that here we have history, and not versions or echoes of ancient legend.

A comparison of the numbers in the Septuagint and in the Samaritan Pentateuch, with those of the Hebrew text, seems to show that there has been no change in the latter. It will be observed also that the numbers in Genesis v. have been specially guarded. All the statements are cast in the following mould: "And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: and Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died" (Genesis v. 9-11). Now a mistake might be made in transcribing one—let us even say two—of these numbers. But it

44 Genesis—SECTION VI.—xi. 10—26.

would be a very strange fatality, indeed, which would make the third number contain in that case the exact sum of the first and the second. The fact that the list shows no internal discrepancies may be taken as a guarantee that the numbers have been handed down to us as they were originally penned by the hand of Moses.

This, and other important questions with regard to the Biblical chronology, I have discussed more fully in a recent publication* than is possible in the present chapter. It has long been felt that the Bible figures were not fully understood, and there were difficulties which intimated that writers like Ussher had assumed too readily that the Scriptures intended to provide merely chronological information. That one generation is omitted in Genesis xi. is proved by Luke iii. 35, 36, where we learn that there were three generations — Arphaxad, Caïnan, Salah — whereas Gen. xi. 10-12 mentions two only. This indicates, what the chapters in Genesis themselves make sufficiently clear, that we have there, not a mere genealogical chain, but *a series of Divine selections*. In addition to this, it escaped notice that *the numbers are confined to the record of these selections*. No numbers whatever are given with the descendants of Cain, or of Japheth, or of Ham, or even in the ordinary genealogy of Shem. If the Scripture intended merely to furnish its reader with chronological data, why were the numbers withheld in all these other instances?

* *How Old is Man? Some Misunderstood Chapters in Scripture Chronology*
 2/6 net. Messrs. Nisbet and Co.)

It will be clear that, if the purpose of the Scripture was not to provide us with a mere chronology when it did give numbers, *these might very probably be charged with a higher mission?* When I add that the Scripture itself has shown that the statements are not to be received as merely chronological, it will be felt that it is more than probable that they serve some other Divine purpose. We are told, for example (Genesis v. 32), that "Noah was 500 years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth." We should conclude from this that Shem was the first-born. But we read again: "Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the Flood" (xi. 10). But the Flood occurred when Noah was 600 years old. If the words "after the Flood" mean "after the Flood began," then Noah was 603 at the birth of Arphaxad; and Shem, if he was really Noah's first-born, was 103, and not merely 100 years old. And yet it will be observed that the Scripture statement is precise and emphatic in its announcement that Shem was born when Noah was 500 years old. The customary method is to set down a statement of this kind as a "difficulty," and to pass on. If it is not merely a difficulty, however, but distinct Divine direction, what then?

Similarly we read (xi. 26): "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." As in the case of Shem and Noah, Abram is ranked here as Terah's first-born. But the Scripture informs us immediately afterwards that he was not really—that is reckoning by descent—the first-born. In

xii. 4 we learn that Abram was seventy-five when he left Haran for Canaan; but, as is indicated in the context, and as is clearly stated in Acts vii. 4, Abram left Haran at his father's death. As his father died, however, at the age of 205 (Genesis xi. 32), Terah must have been 130, and not merely 70, when Abram was born. Ussher and others have admitted this as *a correction* of the chronology; but they have not weighed the question why the Scripture, while correcting a mistaken inference, should also have definitely stated that "Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram." It is clear, however, that if we are to build our chronology upon the statements of the Bible, we must take them *all*, and not merely such as suit us. In other words, we must interpret, and not wrest, the Scriptures.

What, then, do both statements mean? Plainly that Abram, though not in fact Terah's first-born, is *accepted of God, and regarded by Him, as the first-born*. In like manner Shem, though not Noah's first-born, is plainly put by God in the place of the first-born. These ancestors of the Christ are types of Him, who is the First-born of all creation, and who as our Elder Brother assumes our load and effects our deliverance. The numbers are, consequently, used to claim and secure this place for the elected one in each of these generations; and they thus inscribe upon the history of humanity, in deep and imperishable characters, the great doctrine of Substitution, which runs through the whole of Scripture.

It will be asked, however, have we no chronology?

The answer must evidently be that we have chronological limits, but no means of giving the precise year of any event before the time of Abraham; and this now permits us, in God's gracious Providence, to clear away the difficulty which the various chronologies had placed in our way. If Abram was not born when Terah was seventy—Terah's age when his family began—then Abram must have been born sometime between that period and the time of his father's death. The same reasoning applies to each of these twenty generations (or, including Caïnan mentioned in Luke, twenty-one). We are, therefore, compelled to take an average as the probable birth-year of the Divinely-selected one. Adding the year of the birth of the first-born to the after-period of the father's life, and dividing the result by two, we reach what we may regard as a likely birth-year of him, who, in many cases at least, was possibly, like David, the youngest of the family. The figures, worked out in this way in the little book already referred to, give 4,413 years from the creation of Adam as the probable date of the Flood, and 10,072 years as the probable total duration of man's existence upon the earth up to this year of grace, 1905. These dates leave a margin of uncertainty; but, besides loyally interpreting the Scripture, they both clear away a rapidly-increasing load of difficulty, and place before us in living characters the great truth, which those numbers of the Bible were no doubt intended to teach, namely, that Christ is the Divinely-appointed

BURDEN-BEARER AND REDEEMER OF OUR RACE.

SECTION VII.

THE GENERATIONS OF TERAH.

GENESIS XI. 27—XXV. 11.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE AND CHARACTER OF THE NARRATIVE.

HITHERTO we have witnessed the expansion of the new humanity, and have marked the peopling of the lands by the descendants of the three great families. And now the record of Genesis ceases to be the history of humanity. Evidently with a distinct consciousness that this part of the Book's mission was attained, each section of the account of the posterity of Noah concludes with what is intended to be a final view of the families and their settlements. After the enumeration of the sons of Japheth, we read:

“From these were the coasts of the nations divided in their lands, each according to its tongue, according to their families, in their nations” (x. 5).

The Japhites were the dwellers by the sea. The descendants of Ham are similarly parted from:

“These are the sons of Ham, according to

The Section a closely-connected Narrative. 49

their families, to their tongues, in their lands, in their nations" (verse 20).

So also with the posterity of Shem, introduced here with the evident purpose of completing the picture of the human race in its partition of the earth:

"These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their tongues, in their lands, according to their nations" (ver. 31).

And the whole is summed up in the words:

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations (*thöledöth*), in their nations, and from these were the nations divided (or separated) in the earth after the Flood" (verse 32).

One thing only requires now to be added: What divided them? Genesis is henceforth to be the history of a redemptive race. What has made its existence necessary? The answer to this lies in the concluding paragraph of Section V.—the story of the rebellion at Babel and its punishment (xi. 1-9). Then follows Section VI., setting forth the selected progenitors of Abraham and of Christ; and now, in Section VII., we have, in the generations of Terah, the commencement of the history of the selected family in which there will be ingathering and blessing for the scattered sons of men.

It will be seen, therefore, that, although we enter here upon a new part of the story of Genesis, there is no dislocation. The Book exhibits instead a well-ordered progress. Everything is in strict logical

connection, and the more minute our study of the Book is, the more marvellous become its close and suggestive sequences. It is well to bear this in mind as we now enter upon one of its longest and most important sections. Those fourteen chapters, which tell the story of Abraham, have had to bear the fiercest of the critical attacks upon the credibility and the unity of the Book. Dillmann, for example, says: "It is self-evident to us moderns that all these stories regarding the patriarchs belong to the realm of legend, not to that of strict history."* So fully has that estimate of these inspired records of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob been accepted as one of the best "ascertained results of the higher criticism," that this "moderate critic" has to protest against its being placed upon a *lower* level than that of ordinary folk-tales and legends! "But when we acknowledge the presence," he says, "of a substratum of historical fact in the epics of other peoples, why should we pronounce a less favourable judgment on the tribal legends of the very people which passed earliest out of its mythological period?"

But the twelve years which have passed since Dillmann's sixth edition left his hands have proved to be an eventful period for the higher criticism. The researches in Babylonia, Palestine, and Egypt have had time to tell. One result is seen in Driver's modified view of the Patriarchal history. "The substance of the narrative," he says, "is, no doubt, historical; though the characters and experiences

* *Genesis*, vol. ii., p. 1.

seem to be idealized. . . . The outline of these narratives, we may confidently hold, was supplied by tradition ; but in the details something, at any rate, will be due to the historical imagination of the narrators, who filled in what tradition handed down to them with picturesque circumstance and colloquy, and at the same time breathed into them the same deep and warm religious spirit by which they were inspired themselves."* Whether Dr. Driver's Bible is any real advance upon Dillmann's may be questioned. But the change of view as to the essentially historical character of the Patriarchal history is full of encouragement for those who are toiling to-day in the vindication of the inspired Word of God. Archæology has enabled us to test the minute details of these picturesque narratives, and the result has been an overwhelming conviction that the eye of their Author rested upon the actual circumstances of the time. The conclusion which is forced upon us by those recent discoveries is thus the very opposite of that which is reached in that last word of the higher criticism, as stated above, by Dr. Driver. The details are not in anywise due to "the historical imagination" of late writers. They can only have sprung from actual acquaintance with the places and the times.

But criticism has not contented itself with the denial of the historical character of the section : it has also attacked its unity. Gunkel breaks up the narrative into thirty-seven "pieces." These are

* *Genesis*, p. 143.

52 Genesis—SECTION VII.—xi. 27—xxv. 11.

also separated and re-arranged in his "reconstructed" Genesis. We have consequently to run hither and thither through his pages in search of the various fragments of this dismembered and mangled body. Thus we discover xi. 28-30 on pages 143-144; but to find verses 31, 32, which, in the Bible as given by the Spirit of God, and as authenticated and guaranteed by our Lord and His apostles, immediately follow 28-30, we have to go back to pages 139-140. xii. 1-4a is on pages 144-146; but we must go back one hundred pages to pick up the second part of verse 4 and verse 5. xiii. 11b-12 is on page 232; and here again we must turn back for seventy-eight pages before we can discover the next six verses, &c., &c.

The reader has only to consult the margin of Driver's Genesis to understand what all this means. Unlike his German contemporary, he has not yet broken up the Book. We are still permitted in his pages to read it as it has been read by the Jewish people for thirty-four, and by the Christian Church for more than eighteen, centuries. But the reader is, nevertheless, being prepared for the coming dismemberment. Verses and paragraphs are assigned to the imaginary "sources" accepted by the critics of the day. xi. 27 is given to P; 28-30 to J; 31-32 to P; xii. 1-4a to J—and so the dance goes on. As has been said by Prof. Sayce, the old astronomy, with its cycles and epicycles, is outdistanced by the confusion worse confounded of the higher criticism.

The best answer to this amazing theory is to be

found in the contents of the Section upon which we enter in the next chapter. That will demonstrate that this part of the Word of God never was, and never could have been, the patchwork and the derangement of the critical analysis. Meanwhile, let it be noted that this and the following Sections bear upon them clearly and unmistakably the impress of the Divine seal. Genesis, as we have seen, has been hitherto the story of humanity; and now it suddenly becomes the story of a single family from which springs the last-born of the nations. But beneath this change there lies that definite prophetic conviction which is the marvel—and the miracle—of Genesis and of the Bible. This small people is set forth as the one hope of humanity. That destiny is assured to it by solemn compact, by many promises, and by repeated covenants. The nations have gone forth, each taking its own way. But the day will come when the need, which nothing of all that they have sought or attained can satisfy, will lift its cry. And in Israel will there be found the blessing for which all have thirsted: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (xxii. 18). That assurance clung to Israel all through its after-history. This was the people from which alone the earth's need was to be satisfied: and now what shall we say? With that full blessing before us, which men of every nationality have found in Christ, THE SEED OF ABRAHAM, is it possible for any man to deny that there are here a foresight and an ever-living and unslumbering purpose which are alike Divine?

Other proofs abound. Some of these are found in the main facts of the narrative—in the ordering of the events and in the preservation of the record of them for after use. For all are marvellously adapted for the service which they were to render in the training of the Israelitish people. That people is to be consecrated and trained for God's service. For this end what could be better devised than this clear disclosure of God in His livingness, His nearness, His present help, His absolute knowledge of us, and His watchful care? There is one fact also in this history of Israel eloquent of Divine purpose. For each of three successive generations the history of this people is the history of one man. Three times in succession, therefore, is the truth inscribed upon the foundations of Israel's history that *Jehovah is the God of the individual*, and is concerned not with men in the mass merely, but with each one apart and alone. And lest this lesson should be missed, or should fail to make the impression intended, Jehovah is described as the God of these three men—the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Ex. iii. 6). There is surely a very evident purpose in that arrangement and in the place given to the record of it.

There is a further service rendered to all after-generations in the large picture which is here presented and preserved of Abraham. That Patriarch is spoken of in the New Testament as "THE FATHER OF ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE" (Romans iv. 11). He does not flee from the world like Budha; but, though in the world, he is not of it. He will not

settle in any of the Canaanitish cities, lest he and his should learn their ways. He dwells apart "in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews xi. 9, 10). In an age when the acknowledgment of God was so largely associated with what is external, and in the midst of a people whose worship was so full of ritual, how did it happen that this life resisted so triumphantly all those tendencies? How came it to pass that that ancient time presents us with so vivid and so impressive a picture of a life lived with God? The explanation, that God was in very truth laying here the foundation of His kingdom in the earth, and that He has preserved its record for us, satisfies. No other explanation can possibly account for the facts.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONTENTS.

THIS Section extends from xi. 27 to xxv. 11. It, therefore, covers nearly fourteen complete chapters. The preceding Section consists of only seventeen verses; the Section before that of one chapter and nine verses; and the longest Section up to this point (that of the generations of Noah, containing the history of the Flood) extends to three chapters and fourteen verses. So striking an expansion as this, covering four times the space allotted to the history

of the judgment of the old world, naturally commands attention. Has it arisen from accident or from design ? *

Two other instances of this seeming irregularity are met with in the after part of the Book. Seven verses (xxv. 12-18) are given to the genealogy of the Ishmaelites, and then once more the writer's pen lingers with evident fondness. Eleven chapters and fourteen verses are given to "the generations of Isaac." One chapter and one verse are subsequently assigned to "the generations of Esau," and the whole of the remainder of the Book—fourteen chapters—is occupied with "the generations of Jacob." That is to say, thirty-nine out of the fifty chapters are taken up with the story of these three men—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and only eleven are devoted to all the other varied and important contents of the Book !

That fact is quite enough to wreck every critical theory as to the origin and composition of this Book. Genesis is clearly the Book of humanity. It reveals the origin of man. It lifts the veil from man's early experiences. It shows us the scattering of the human race and where each of the great families settles and grows into a people. And now, in thus dwelling upon the story of these three men, it indicates that the hope of humanity is bound up with them. We must, indeed, go farther than even this, and note that the Book not only indicates this, but also records a promise to these three men that in their seed shall all the

* See Introductory Volume (Marshall Brothers), p. 204.

families of the earth be blessed (xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14). Along the line, then, of the posterity of these men lies the hope of our race. From the midst of this people there are to arise for humanity redemption, and a unity deeper and more satisfying than that which was lost. This is the marvellous conviction and confidence which expressed itself in those words; and they have embalmed themselves in the surprising expansion of these three Sections. And now, when we note whence the power came that has blessed the nations—when we call to mind the Gospel and the Saviour—we acknowledge that the eye of the Composer of Genesis must have clearly foreseen that mightiest fact in human history, the advent of the Christ. To acknowledge that is to confess that the Book is a Divine unity.

A question naturally presents itself as we enter upon the study of the Section now before us. It is really the history of Abraham. Why, then, should it be entitled "The Generations of Terah"? The answer lies partly in the meaning of *Thōlēdōth*, "generations." The *tōlēdōth* of Terah, are what sprang from Terah—what resulted from his existence on the earth. The story of Abraham has, therefore, its right place in "the generations of Terah." But this is far from being a complete explanation. It may be that Terah, having associated himself with his son Abraham in the latter's departure from Ur, in obedience to the Divine command, is honoured by this association with Abraham in God's Word. But is it not possible that the insertion of Terah's name

takes us farther? Terah's house is, and remains, Gentile. It halts at Haran, and the people which springs up in and around that settlement never coalesces with Israel. The placing of Terah's name over Abraham's history lays the hand, as it were, of Gentile appropriation upon the blessing of Abraham. The blessing which is to spring up here is blessing for Gentile as well as for Jew.

These fourteen chapters are divided into three Sections. The division is indicated by the writer of the Book. The reader will notice the words in xv. 1: "After these things the word of the Lord came," &c. This means that the continuity of the history is broken. We are led on without a break from xi. 27 to xiv. 24. Each incident is narrated in more or less close connection with that which precedes it. But the words, "After these things," point out that the continuity is now that of time rather than of subject. Chapter xxii. commences similarly—"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham." We have thus these minor divisions: (1) xi. 27—xiv. 24; (2) xv. 1—xxi. 34; and 3) xxii. 1—xxv. 11.

I. THE INHERITANCE.

XI. 27—XIV. 24.

The English Authorised Version and the French stand alone in rendering xii. 1 as follows:

"Now—or and—the Lord HAD said unto

Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I shall shew thee."

Translated in that way, the Scripture informs us that Abram had previously received this command. We are thus left to infer that the movement from Ur in the south of Babylonia to Haran in the north of Syria had been due to the Divine call. The other translations, which our own Revised Version has joined, leave out "had," and translate as a simple past—"the Lord said"—leading us to conclude that the command came to him after the death of his father. I have already explained that there is only one past tense in Hebrew, and that it has to do duty for past, perfect, and pluperfect. It has to be rendered as a pluperfect in verse 4: "So Abram departed, as the Lord HAD SPOKEN unto him." A slight study of a statement in the previous chapter will convince us that the pluperfect is equally necessary in xii. 1. For we read that Terah's object in leaving Ur was to go to *Canaan* (xi. 31). What had led to that intention? This is fully explained when we read xii. 1 as translated in the Authorised Version. The summons came to Abram while he was still at Ur, in the home of his fathers.

He enters the land at last. The mixed company halted midway, and were not troubled by any sense of disobedience. But Abram could not forget; and, as soon as the last rites were paid in the burial of Terah, Abram resumed his journey. This seems to be the point of the words:

“And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came” (verse 5).

There was now no half-obedience.

The study of the types of Scripture has often lacked sobriety. Let the reader take the following hint for what he may judge it to be worth. Sarai, we are now told, had *two* captivities. Her first experience (the account of which occurs in this subsection) may possibly be prophetic of the experience of the nation which was to spring from her. After entering the promised land, she is compelled by famine to go down into Egypt. There she is imprisoned in the harem of the king. Her great destiny is threatened; for the intention of the Egyptian Power is that she shall live and die in Egypt. God plagues the king's house. The king releases Sarai, and accompanies the release with splendid gifts. It is the picture of Israel's story, its descent to Egypt, its danger, its deliverance and enrichment.

They return (xiii.), as Israel were afterwards to return, to the land. Then comes Abram's separation from Lot, and in that the sundering of the last of the old associations, thus leaving Abram perfect freedom to walk with God. The Section closes (xiv.) with Abram's triumph over Chedorlaomer and his host; the recovery of Lot, of the other captives, and of the spoils of Sodom and Gomorrah; and the meeting with Melchizedek. The Section is thus an epitome of Israel's story. There is trial; temporary exile; return; separation; triumph over the invading foe;

the called of God working deliverance for the surrounding peoples; and the appearing of the King of Righteousness and King of Peace.

II. THE PROMISED SEED.

XV. 1—XXI. 34.

This second Section begins with what seems to be a distinct reference to one of the closing incidents of the first Section. There were, doubtless, rumours of a fresh invasion from Babylonia, and Abram may have feared that vengeance might be exacted for the former defeat of the Babylonian army. We find a trace of this in the words (to which we shall refer again):

“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir”
(xv. 1-3).

The Lord's words allay the dread of human vengeance. But Abram is disturbed by another apprehension. God cannot have forgotten the solemn covenant made with His servant; and, nevertheless, fulfilment has been withheld until now fulfilment seems to be impossible. Has he offended, and has God revoked the promise, and decreed that he shall die childless?

God now, therefore, gives him a fresh pledge that the promise holds and shall be fulfilled.

“And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness” (verse 6).

Along with that renewal of the promise there was given a revelation of the destiny of his posterity—the reader will note how steadily our attention is kept throughout this sub-section upon the promised seed. “The horror of great darkness” (verse 12) told of Egypt’s bitter persecution of Israel. But a time is set for their deliverance and their return to their own land. In chapter xvi. we have the story of Sarai’s device. The fulfilment of the promise still lingered. What seems to be Divine delay tried faith then as it has tried faith ever since; and the flesh endeavoured to furnish what God had promised and alone could bestow. Sarai’s device is adopted by Abram, and the result is trouble in the home. Hagar despises her mistress; and when Sarai asserts her authority, there is secession with its scandal and sorrow. Hagar flees. She is Divinely directed to return, and to be in subjection. Ishmael is born; and the affection of Abram entwines itself around him who is not to be his heir. The story now passes over thirteen years (chapter xvii.) Abram is ninety-nine years old when God appears to him once more. The covenant is renewed, and the promise of the seed of blessing is reaffirmed. Twelve months from that day Sarai’s son is to be born, and his name is announced. But the promised seed can only enter a sanctified home;

and so Abram and his house must be circumcised. It is in vain that Abram desires God to accept Ishmael, the child of the flesh, for the child of the promise :

“And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before Thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him” (verses 18, 19).

The name of the promised offspring was a rebuke to unbelief and a prophecy of joy. Abraham had laughed in incredulity; and so his son was to bear the name “He-will-laugh.” The offspring whose advent seemed incredible would bring to the patriarch’s life brightness and consolation.

In chapters xviii. and xix. we have further preparations for the coming of the Promised One. The gift of God can be bestowed only upon faith. Hence the interview with Abraham in the hearing of Sarah. On her part also the promise is listened to with a quiet laugh of incredulity. But the laughter gives place to awe as she recognises that she is in the presence of Omniscience. The place for the promised Seed must also be swept by the fire of judgment; and Sodom, whose cry has gone up unto heaven, is to be dealt with. In this last detail the picture of the latter day is unmistakable. The way for the earth’s abiding blessing and the coming of its King will be prepared by judgment of the world’s sin; and, mean-

while, the friends of God share His confidence. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

"And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him" (verses 17-19).

And so the Lord spoke to him of Sodom's sin and its approaching recompense. The result was awe, compassion, and intercession. God has in like manner made known His counsels to Abraham's seed—the household of faith; and the result has been, and is still, the same. There is the awed heart, the pleading soul, and the willing feet that run to warn Sodom of her doom. But the blow fell, and the fate of Lot has its lessons as well as the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In chapter xx. we read how unbelieving fear was again rebuked, and how faith was strengthened by the manifestation of God's unfailing care. Attention has been drawn to the close resemblance which this captivity of Sarah in Gerar bears to the previous incident in Egypt. Perhaps the objection based upon the repetition would lose its force, if it were remem-

bered that, as already noted, *there were two captivities of Israel before the Messiah appeared*—the captivity in Egypt and the captivity in Babylon. In xxi. the promise, oft-repeated like that of the Messiah, and the accomplishment of which (as of it) was long delayed, is at last fulfilled. Isaac is born. But when the seed of the promise is recognised, the contemptuous and scornful seed of the flesh is cast out:

"And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (xxi. 9, 10).

It grieved Abraham exceedingly; but he obeyed the Divine injunction. This sub-section ends with Abraham's neighbours and previous troublers making a covenant of peace with him (verses 22-34). It is not without significance that this intermediate section should end with the words:

"And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days" (verse 34).

It completes the picture; for thus, too, has run the story of the Church and the manifested Christ. He also, cherished in the midst of rejoicing faith, has "sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days."

*III. THE SACRIFICE AND THE MARRIAGE
OF THE PROMISED ONE.*

XXII. 1—XXV. 11.

This third and last Section is sharply ruled off by the words : “And it came to pass after these things.” But this introduction is followed by a startling statement :—

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did try Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (xxii. 1, 2).

I do not dwell here upon the type, which this greatest trial of Abraham's life supplies, of the Father and the Son in that Moriah-sacrifice which secured the world's redemption, or to point out how “The father of all them that believe” was thus made to drink of God's cup and of Christ's.* I merely ask the reader to mark the fact that the references to Isaac in this Section of the history are confined to the sacrifice on Mount Moriah and to his marriage. But between these two events there comes the death and burial of Sarah (xxiii.) The Section ends (xxv. 1-11) with the mention of other children that were born to Abraham, and with the record of the patriarch's death.

* For a notice of the Sacrifice of Isaac, see *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., pp. 238-262.

Let me repeat that I have no desire to thrust typical interpretations upon the attention of the reader. I am quite aware of the danger of giving the reins into the hand of fancy ; and I know also with what impatience typical suggestions are dismissed by many. But if the Old Testament really is—what the New Testament declares it to be—not a history merely, but also a typical foreshadowing, of things that were yet to come, then it can only be understood fully when its typical character is perceived, and when its typical pictures are contemplated. Let me add that, when this aspect of the Old Testament is manifested and received, unbelief will die, and the Christian Church will be wholly lifted out of the atmosphere of scepticism. Is it not possible that these Old Testament types may be God's provision for our day of need ? A clear, distinct, and detailed prediction is indeed wonderful—so wonderful as to carry with it the immediate and irresistible conviction that it can only have come from God. But the recounting of a history so that the past shall unveil the future, and set forth in well-ordered sequence the secret things of long subsequent ages, is surely a thousand times more marvellous than the clearest direct prediction. Remembering this, I venture to suggest that, if Sarah represents the old Israel, and Rebekah the new Israel, this Section sets before us a prophetic picture which sums up distinct predictions both of the Old Testament and of the New. For these three events occur in this very order in the life of Jesus as recorded in history and revealed in prophecy :—

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1. His sacrifice on Mount Moriah.

2. The passing away of the carnal Israel which gave Him birth. It will have its tomb in the land; for, like Sarah, it will be brought there and die without seeing His glory.

3. The bringing from the midst of the Gentiles the new Israel into the land of promise, and her marriage with the Promised One. "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (xxiv. 67).

Let me also ask the reader to note the arrangement of these three Sections into which, as we have just seen, "the Generations of Terah" are divided. There is first of all (xi. 27—xiv. 24) "THE INHERITANCE," in which the story of Israel's possession and re-possession of the land is told in figure, the whole ending with the triumph which God gives to His servant and the vision of the coming Christ in Melchizedec—Jerusalem's acknowledged Priest and King. Then (2) we are taken farther in xv. 1—xxi. 34. Here our attention is fixed, not now upon the land, but upon "the Promised Seed." This is a story of long waiting, of seeming Divine forgetfulness, and of the strengthening of hope by repeated promises. Then at last the Promised One appears, and is scorned and mocked by the child of the flesh. This division closes with the expulsion of the son of the bond-woman and the leaving of the true heir in quiet and complete possession. (3) Last of all, in xxii. 1—

xxv. 11, the story reaches its climax in the offering of Isaac; the passing away of her whose offspring he was; the bringing of Isaac's bride, and the establishment of Isaac's home in the land. Is it not marvellous that there should be this manifest arrangement and progress in these fourteen chapters, and that the incidents narrated should thus dovetail into each other so as to present this three-fold and progressive story? That in itself is a somewhat startling indication of an all-pervading plan in this Book of Genesis—a plan that touches, shapes, and arranges everything. I need hardly add that, if we feel assured that this Planner had before His eye the yet unborn Israel and the yet unborn Christ, we shall require no further evidence to compel the conclusion that this is, indeed, the very Word of God.

CHAPTER III.

THE "CRITICAL" DIVISION OF THE SECTION.

THE reader has been impressed by one fact in the perusal of the Section. It is a manifest unity. Not only does it recount one continuous history, but it also presents, in those three divisions which we have just noted, three typical pictures which could have been painted by the hand of Omniscience alone. Those three pictures are plainly parts of one continuous and complete design—a design which could not by any possibility have been

grasped by a number of writers of independent documents or of supplements; and which no human editors could ever have contributed to bring out in all its vividness and completeness. The critical hypothesis vanishes the moment the typical significance of the history is perceived.

To those who are unaware of "critical" achievements, it will be a surprise, therefore, to learn that the Section is broken up by Gunkel, as has been remarked, into thirty-nine fragments, and by Driver into forty-one. A section—and sometimes a few words—is given to J, to E, to P, to R, and the fourteenth chapter is assigned to an entirely new pen, which is named "S S"—initials which Driver explains as meaning "Special Source." With the narrative broken up in that fashion, dislocations were, of course, inevitable. We read in xi. 31, for instance:

"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."

Now it has pleased the critics to give the above words to P. XII. 1, on the other hand, is assigned to J. In this last Abraham is commanded to leave his "COUNTRY." XXIV. 4-7 are also assigned to J. The latter verses run as follows (the words are spoken by Abraham to his servant Eliezer):

"But thou shalt go into my country, and to

my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. . . The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land—He shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence."

Now the place indicated here is confessedly Haran, in the North of Syria, and not Ur in the South of Chaldea. It follows, therefore, the critics urge, that J is out of accord with P; for P has said that Abram was a native of Ur, and not of Haran. The two sources, say they, are consequently in antagonism. The unsophisticated reader hastens to explain. He remembers, in the first place, that *both Haran and Ur are on the East of the Euphrates*. They are accordingly both "beyond the river," and both belong, therefore, to Abraham's country. He has also recalled the fact that the Scripture has explained fully how Abraham's kindred are now to be found at Haran. In chapter xi. 4, 5 we read:

"So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and all the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" (xii. 4, 5).

This, the unsophisticated reader imagines, makes everything plain. Ur was the original starting-point, and Haran merely a resting-place. But, alas! he has no notion of the piercing insight of "the higher criticism." It here catches P in the very act of adulterating, and utterly changing, the narrative! It is P, says Dr. Driver and the rest, who has here added verse 5 and the latter half of verse 4. The reader innocently asks how Dr. Driver happens to know this? The reply is: "Did you not observe that number 'seventy and five'?" P is the only man who was able to reckon, or who, at least, ever thought of reckoning; and consequently this seventy-five announces that P is at work again! And verse 5, we are told, crowns this demonstration!

The truth is, that this formed too good an opportunity of manufacturing a discrepancy to allow of its being given up. We were told that J believed that Haran was Abraham's birth-place, and that P was equally certain that the patriarch was a native of Ur in the South of Chaldea. Being so much later a writer than J, P was able to use liberties with his predecessor's narrative; and so, by the insertion of a verse and a-half, he has most adroitly, they say, concealed the divergency. Even criticism, however, is compelled to give way eventually before the pressure of facts. Believing scholars pointed out that the critics had paid but slight attention to the statements of their creature J; and that their theories were shaped by fancy, and not by what even they admitted to be fact. XV. 7, which Dr. Driver and

others assign to J, runs thus: "And He (Jehovah) said unto him (Abraham), I am the Lord that BROUGHT THEE OUT OF UR OF THE CHALDEES to give thee this land to inherit it." There J, so far from believing that Abraham was a native of Haran, states most emphatically that Abraham had been brought from "Ur of the Chaldees"! P and J are, therefore, in complete agreement, and are indeed—in spite of the "seventy-five," one and the same writer. This may be taken as a specimen of those manufactured "inconsistencies" and "disagreements of the sources."

Chapter xiv. is ascribed, as we have seen, to an entirely new writer. He is said to have lived in Babylon; and he could, of course, have had no knowledge of the other documents with which his work was to be so closely associated. The following facts are consequently exceedingly mysterious. Halevy* has pointed out that "S S" reveals a close and minute acquaintance with the facts just narrated by J and P! Abraham, for example, is in the neighbourhood of Sodom, and yet so far away that he has to be informed by a messenger of the sack of Sodom and the captivity of Lot. But this assumes that the reader is aware that Abram and Lot have parted, and that, while Lot selected the Jordan valley, Abram had travelled South to "the oaks of Mamre," in the neighbourhood of Hebron (see xiii. 7-18). It may also be added that, had not "S S" been the same writer from whose pen we

* *Recherches Bibliques*, Tome I., 333.

have received the preceding history, he would have left us the most incomplete of all narratives. Who was Lot? Of this "S S" yields no explanation. How had Lot come to Canaan? What had led him into the neighbourhood of Sodom? Who was Mamre, the Amorite, and how had Abram come to enter into a defensive alliance with Mamre and his friends? The only possible explanation of all this is that "S S" is fully satisfied that he has already answered all these questions. That is to say, "S S" is identical with J and P, the writers of chapter xiii. And this is not all. The authors of chapter xv.—J and E—also write in the belief that we are acquainted with chapter xiv. For they record God's words: "Fear not, Abram: for I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (verse 1). What has happened that God's servant requires this special consolation? That is a question on which E and J say nothing, but which "S S" has fully answered. When we look back to chap. xiv. we understand (1) that Abram has to dread Babylonian vengeance, and (2) that he has just resolutely declined an earthly "reward," having refused to enrich himself by so much as a shoe-latchet out of the spoils which he had brought back from the foe. E and J (between whom the critics divide the opening verses of chapter xv.) are consequently as well acquainted with "S S" as "S S" is with the work of J and P in chapter xiii. In other words, one and the same writer is paraded by the critics under four different designations, and all their

ingenuity is devoted to make him appear to be four distinct persons.

Critical theories labour under like difficulties throughout. Chapters xvii. and xxiii. are assigned to P. In the case of chapter xvii. the critics are compelled, by what they have described as the epoch-making "discovery" which established their "science," to assign it to an author distinct from J, to whom they give chapters xvi. and xviii. For, if the reader will turn to these last chapters he will find the name LORD, that is, Jehovah, used throughout, save in one instance, which somewhat disturbs critical equanimity (xvi. 13). If we turn now to chapter xvii. we are confronted by an abrupt and striking change. Here, after verse 1 (the reader will meanwhile note this exception)—the name Jehovah (LORD) does not once appear. With the single exception of the name "Lord" in verse 1, just mentioned, the Divine name is invariably "God" (Elohim): "I am the Almighty God" (verse 1); "And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with Him" (verse 3); "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep My covenant" (verse 9), &c. It is upon changes of this kind in the use of the Divine names, *Jehovah* and *Elohim*, that the critical theory of the existence of independent documents in Genesis is professedly founded. There could be no fitter illustration, however, than this of the fatal lack of insight to which the higher criticism owes its origin and its continuance. *Jehovah* and *Elohim* are two Hebrew words which, like all other words in that language,

have their own special significance. *Jehovah* means "he shall cause it to be," or "to happen." *Elohim* is the plural of a word *Eloah*, which signifies "might." *Elohim*, therefore, designates God as the possessor of all power. Now the contents of chapter xvii. form a full explanation of the change in the Divine name. Faith in God's *power* has to be planted in the breasts of both Abram and Sarai. For a promise is now given to these aged believers, which only belief in *the power* of Him Who makes it can credit. Hence throughout the interview the name "God" (*Elohim*), and this name alone, is used. The key-note is struck in the opening words:

"And when Abram was **NINETY YEARS OLD AND NINE**, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God"
[*El Shaddai*] (verse 1).

Here the Lord reminds Abram of His omnipotence, so indicating that nothing is impossible with God, and assures him that he, the aged Abram, shall be the father, and that the aged Sarai shall be the mother, of the promised one. The reader has already observed also that *both names of God occur in the first verse*, and are both given by the critics to P (see verse 1)! So utterly impossible is it to make Genesis square with this ill-considered theory of diverse sources.

That chapter xvii. never belonged to a separate document, but has always been an essential part of the Genesis history, is too evident to require proof. For example, it is implied, in verses 18, 19, that

Abraham has a son, named Ishmael, whose mother is not Sarah. For information upon this matter we depend upon chapter xvi. We might show further how other statements bind the chapter to what goes before and to what comes after, and that it cannot possibly be taken out of the Book without marring its unity, and throwing the history into confusion. Genesis is as much a unity as the human frame; and we can as little cut and carve one without injury, as we can without injury cut and carve the other.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE GENERATIONS OF TERAH" AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERY.

THE critical objections to Genesis xiv. have been singularly unfortunate. Reuss finds in some of its geographical notices what he believes to be incontestable proofs of the late origin of the narrative. He says: "It cannot be as ancient as one wishes to suppose it. Thus it is said that Abraham comes up with his enemies at Dan. But we know that the name of this locality dates only from the epoch of the Judges (Judges xviii. 29), and that it must proceed from a tribe issuing from a patriarch of the same name, who, according to Genesis, could only have been the grandson of Abraham. So also it is said that the foreign conquerors over-ran and ravaged the country of the Amalekites; but this was a tribe

supposed to issue from a certain Amalek, who, according to Genesis (xxxvi. 12), was equally a grandson of Abraham. . . . The narrator, in mentioning these, shows therefore that he lived at a time very far removed from that of the facts which he recounts.”*

This admits of an obvious reply. In later times some of the districts overrun by the Mesopotamian army were occupied by nations proceeding, in one instance, from Esau, a grandson of Abraham; and, in other two cases, from a nephew, Lot. If the writer, therefore, is speaking of the country as he knew it in days long subsequent to those of Abraham, why is there no mention of Edom, or of Moab, or of Ammon? The only possible explanation of the writer's utter silence with regard to these is that the country before his eye, and to which he is directing the attention of his readers, is the country of a much earlier time—the country, in short, of the days of Abraham.

It may be that the Amalekites were descended from Amalek, the son of Esau (Genesis xxxvi. 12), though of that we have no certainty. But M. Reuss ought to have noted and accounted for the special phrase which occurs in Genesis xiv. 7. The writer does not say that Chedorlaomer and his allies slew or captured the Amalekites. The statement he makes was plainly fashioned in order to avoid any assertion of that kind. He says that they “smote ALL THE COUNTRY (‘all the plain,’ *Sideh*) of the

* *L'histoire Sainte et la Loi*, Tome I., 347, 348.

Amalekites." This is the only case in which a district, and not a people, is named. A careful reader will ask why an exception should be made here. If the district was afterwards known to *the Israel of the time of Moses* as the abode of the Amalekites, and if it would not have been recognised if otherwise named, we have a perfectly satisfactory explanation. Such a designation as "the plain of the Amalekites" would have been natural to Moses writing, in the first instance, for Israelites who had just come into memorable conflict with that very people, and who had no doubt passed through their territory. The difficulty about Dan is of an equally flimsy character. There was evidently another and earlier city of the name upon the east of the Jordan.*

The above, however, is only one of the straggling shots of defeated men covering their retreat. Professor Sayce writes, in a recent publication of his: † "In 1869 the great Semitic scholar, Professor Nöldeke, published a treatise on the 'Unhistorical character of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis.' He declared that 'criticism' had for ever disproved its claim to be historical. The political situation presupposed by it was incredible and impossible; at so distant a date Babylonian armies could not have marched to Canaan; much less could Canaan have been a subject province of Babylonia. The whole story, in fact, was a fiction based upon the Assyrian conquest of Canaan in later days. The names of the princes

* See *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. iv., p. 310.

† *Monument Facts and Critical Fancies*, p. 54.

commemorated in it were later inventions; eminent Semitic philologists had already explained those of Chedorlaomer and his allies from Sanskrit, and those of the Canaanitish princes were derived from the events in which they were supposed to have borne a part."*

In the light of what we now know, no statements could be more grotesquely untrue than the above. I have already shown (*The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., p. 170, ff.) how perfect a picture is found here, both of the political conditions of Babylon and Palestine, and of the leaders, of that very time. Even Melchizedek has assumed the reality of flesh and blood, research having shown that priest-kings of this very kind had then their seat at Jerusalem. There was still a difficulty, however, when that part of the *Guide* was published, as to the Scripture form of the name of Khammurabi, the Amraphel of Genesis. But the two or three years which have since elapsed have sufficed to remove the obscurity and to crown this unexpected but Providential confirmation. In the same book, from which I have just quoted, Professor Sayce writes: "The first element in the name of Khammu-rabi is the name of a god which enters also into the composition of the Hebrew names of Ammi-el, Ammi-radab, Rehobo-am, Jerobo-am, and Ben-Ammi, and of which Ammon is merely a derivative. More usually this was spelt Khammu by the Babylonians, but we often find the

* *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments*, Abhandlung III., pp. 156-172 (Kiel, 1869), and *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Theologie* (1870), pp. 213. *et seq.*

spelling Ammu or Ammi as well. Even the spelling in the second element in the name of Khammu-rabi was not uniform; and, as Dr. Pinches was the first to point out, Ammu-rapi is met with by the side of Khammu-rabi.

"Khammu-rabi," he continues, "like others of his dynasty, claimed Divine honours, and was addressed by his subjects as a god. In Babylonia *ilu* is 'god,' the Hebrew *el*, and *Ammu-rapi ilu* would be 'Khammu-rabi the god.' Now *Ammu-rapi ilu* is, letter for letter, the *Anraphel* of Genesis."

Similarly research has made it quite impossible for any real scholar to doubt the historical character of the life of Abraham, as set forth in Genesis. We are told, for example, that Abraham came from Ur in Chaldea. Is it a fact that there were Hebrew-speaking people in Ur 2000 B.C.? Excavators have uncovered the remains of that ancient city, deciphered its monuments, read the names upon them of Terah's contemporaries and their predecessors, and answer: "Yes; there was a Hebrew-speaking people in ancient Ur at that very time." Recalling the fact that the Terah family or tribe arrested its journey at Haran, and, with the exception of Abram, Sarai, and Lot, remained there, we ask another question: "Is there any trace of a Hebrew colony having been planted in that ancient commercial centre in Northern Mesopotamia"? The answer is again a confirmation. There were Hebrews in Haran also, who were men of influence in the place. And

* Pages 59, 60.

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so we follow Abraham step by step, and discover that the statements of the Bible are in full accord with the results of recent exploration and discovery. Thus what criticism has cut up and cast away, science restores with new-born respect and honour.*

* See *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., pp. 64-269.

SECTION VIII.

"THE GENERATIONS OF ISHMAEL."

XXV. 12—18.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONTENTS.

AT this point we come once more to the parting of the ways. Abraham leaves eight sons behind him; but the story of the Bible is to be bound up with the story of the posterity of one of these only, and not at all with that of the posterity of any of the others. As it was with the children of Adam, when Seth was chosen and the rest passed over; with the children of Lamech, when Noah was selected; with the sons of Noah, when the choice fell upon Shem; with the Shemites, when Terah was taken; and with Terah's family, when the choice fell upon Abraham; so is it now with the offspring of Abraham himself. The history of God's kingdom is to become the history of the descendants of Isaac, and not the history of the Ishmaelites, or of the Midianites, or of the rest. These selections are typical. There are nations and individuals whose story is that of God's work in the earth, and whose destinies are bound up with that of the Son of God. We have all of us condemned Rebekah for her eager desire,

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and her unscrupulous planning, that Jacob might have his place among the number: but there have been more questionable ambitions than hers. She rightly regarded the blessing of Abraham and of Isaac as the one thing to desire and to toil for. Her fear lest it should be missed may remind us, who are "workers together with God," and whose story is being, or may yet be, bound up with the story of God's cause in the earth, of such words as: "Make your calling and election sure"; "Let no man take thy crown."

Here, as usual, the story of the rejected is first told; and it is a story of Divine compassion and of blessing. God remembers His promise to Abraham: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation" (xvii. 20). The twelve sons, each of whom became the founder of a people, are here named (xxv. 12-15):

1, Nebajoth.	4, Mibsam.	7, Massa.	10, Jetur.
2, Kedar.	5, Mishma.	8, Hadar.	11, Naphish.
3, Adbeel.	6, Dumah.	9, Tema.	12, Kedemah.

The number twelve excites attention. It recalls the twelve tribes of Israel. But the chosen seed reach this expansion later. All who are to be endowed with God's richer and more abiding gifts have to wait. "The son of the bondwoman"—the seed of the flesh—the Church fashioned by the world—emulates in outward form, and anticipates in magnitude and splendour, the glories promised to that seed in which alone the nations can be blessed.

The Authorised Version of verse 18 retains a mis-translation of the Vulgate : " And he (Ishmael) died (vulgate, *obiit*) in the presence of all his brethren." The Hebrew is *naphal*. This word means "to fall," "to alight," that is, to descend as from a horse or a camel, and therefore "to encamp." The statement records the fulfilment of the promise in xvi. 12 : " He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren " ; and we have to translate : " He encamped in the presence of all his brethren." A further correction of the translation lacks an equally good foundation. Reuss renders the words : " He established himself to the east of all his brethren," and adds that this statement contradicts the preceding statement, which tells us that the Ishmaelites extended also along the frontier of Egypt, and were therefore partly situated to the south and west of the Israelites. The alleged contradiction owes everything to its makers. Among the senses in which the Hebrew phrase *al pēnē* ("before the presence of") is used, Gesenius, indeed, mentions that of "eastward." But not a single instance that he quotes necessitates this meaning, while there is one which appears to be irreconcilable with it. This is the passage, Zechariah xiv. 4 : " And His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before (*al pēnē*) Jerusalem on the east (*mikkedem*). " Now one naturally asks how it happened that, if *al pēnē* really did mean "eastward," *mikkedem* (which unquestionably has that meaning), should be added ? The only sane conclusion from the passage is that *al*

pēnē means “before the presence of,” and that we, in common with our translators, the Targums, and the Versions, must interpret the words in Genesis xxv. 18 as meaning that Ishmael encamped not “eastward”—but “before the presence,” of all his brethren. Wherever his brethren dwelt, the sons of Ishmael confronted them. The prediction was not only fulfilled when the words were written, and when Israel and the other descendants of Abraham had commenced their occupation of Palestine and the neighbouring territories; but, till the latest day of Israel’s occupancy of its promised inheritance, the descendants of Ishmael continued to dwell before the presence of all their brethren.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT THE CRITIC AND THE ARCHÆOLOGIST HAVE
TO SAY REGARDING THE SECTION.

THE Generations of Ishmael,” in common with the entire chapter to which it belongs, has troubled the higher criticism exceedingly. The characteristics which the critics assign to the various imaginary writers intermingle in this twenty-fifth chapter in the most bewildering fashion. Wellhausen says that in chapter xxv. and xxvii. the work of J and E is so mixed up “that a clear separation is not to be thought of.” Another writer is still more emphatic. “This chapter” (xxv.), he says “seems

in fact a critic's limbo for fragments left over by the compilers."* And Halevy, after an investigation which proved the unity of the chapter, throws the blame of all this bewilderment upon the critics themselves. "After this explanation," he writes, "I believe myself authorised to affirm that the critics have bewildered themselves in profitless speculations, because they have not taken the trouble to understand the author."†

In these seven verses the confusion is rampant. The first part of verse 12, the last of verse 16, and verse 17, are said to show clear marks of having proceeded from P. The last part of verse 12 is as clearly the work of E. Verse 18 is assigned to J. But this arrangement, which cannot be said to be conspicuous for clearness, is thrown into confusion by others of equal authority. Gunkel, in common with Dillmann and Driver, ascribes verses 11-17 to P; but when we look in his reconstructed Bible for verse 18, it is no longer to be found as the close of the Section. It is ascribed to J, concluded to be out of its original place, and taken back to chapter xvi. The following is now to be met with, therefore, in the pages of Gunkel: "And Abram was fourscore and six years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram (xvi. 16). . . . And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, which is on the East of Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria; and he settled himself before the presence of all his brethren" (xxv. 18). I need not dwell upon this marvellous restoration. It is plain

* Bacon, *Genesis of Genesis*, p. 152. † *Recherches Bibliques*, vol. I., p. 463.

88 Genesis—SECTION VIII.—xxv. 12—18.

that, after the critics have reconstructed the Bible in that fashion, their services will be in perpetual request for the furnishing of some very necessary explanations. Who are the "they" who "dwelt from Havilah to Shur"? Were they Hagar, Abram, and Ishmael? And is there nothing further to be told of Ishmael than that he was born, and that he died?

Troubles, it has been said, never come singly; and the critics find another in the words, "As thou goest to Assyria" (verse 18). "The phrase," writes Bacon, "is meaningless, and almost certainly corrupt."* The same notion is suggested by Driver. "Assyria," he says, "can hardly be meant, as it would be in the wrong direction altogether. Either the name is that of some place, or people, otherwise unknown, in the direction of Egypt . . . or the words are a misplaced variant of 'unto Shur.'"[†] This would certainly be a very necessary conclusion were the critics right as to the place and time when Genesis was written. If the author were writing subsequent to the Babylonian Exile, it is impossible that *he* could have penned the words as they now stand. After Assyria, as a ruling power, had been wiped out, why should it have been mentioned rather than Persia, the then acknowledged mistress of the world? From his position, too, whether that was in Babylon or in Palestine, the phrase would necessarily have run—"as thou goest from Assyria to Egypt," and not "as thou goest from Egypt to Assyria." But these words, which no man

* *The Genesis of Genesis*, p. 152. † *Genesis*, p. 243.

with the slightest regard for textual authority dare alter, are one of the many things which wreck the critical theories fatally. For they prove that the Book was written for a people who were either in Egypt at the time of its composition, or who had been so long habituated to Egyptian modes of thought and expression that they still thought and spoke in the manner of Egypt. That people was, and could be, no other than the generation of the Exodus. "Shur" means "wall," and the reference is to the well-known elaborate fortifications which, in the very time of Moses, guarded the eastern frontier of Egypt. It is possible that similar precautions against invasion had been made on other sides of this fertile territory; and so the historian has to describe more definitely the "Shur" to which he now refers. It is before, that is, on the frontier of, Egypt on the East, as "thou," an Egyptian resident, "goest toward Assyria." I repeat that this phrase, "as thou goest toward Assyria," is only intelligible, when we admit that Genesis was written not later than the time of Moses.

Traces of these Ishmaelitish peoples are met with in the Assyrian inscriptions. Nebayoth and Kedar are mentioned as closely associated peoples in the monuments of Assurbanipal. Adbeel occurs in the form Idibiil in the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser II. Massa appears as Mas'u in the inscriptions of Assurbanipal and Tiglath-Pileser II. along with Kedar and Nebayoth. Tema is also mentioned along with the Mas'u. Ietur is represented by the Itureans,

who latterly migrated to the middle of the Hauran and founded Iturea. From thence they spread to the mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The Druses are supposed to be their descendants. Duma is the name of an oasis seven days' journey from Damascus, and Thema is that of another important oasis four days' journey to the South-west of Duma. Both of them are mentioned on the monuments of Tiglath-Pileser II. These notices are sufficient to show that here also Genesis is dealing with history and not with poetry or legend.

SECTION IX.

THE GENERATIONS OF ISAAC.

XXV. 19—XXXV. 29.

CHAPTER I.

THIS ninth natural chapter of Genesis records incidents which have made an enduring impression upon the mind of Israel and of humanity. It tells of Jacob's bargaining for the birthright; the deceiving of Isaac; Esau's hatred; the flight of Jacob; the dream at Bethel; Jacob's meeting with Rachel; his stay with Laban; his wives and his children; his flight to Canaan, and Laban's pursuit; Esau's approach at the head of a band of armed men; Jacob's fear, his arrangements, and his wrestling with the angel; the meeting with Esau; Dinah's shame, and the massacre at Shechem; the dwelling at Bethel; and the death and burial of Isaac.

The above enumeration reveals the marvellousness of the Scripture. All those incidents are narrated clearly and fully. The pictures, which have so enriched imagination in all ages since, are painted in unfading colours and filled with distinct details which are grouped with a superb mastery. And, nevertheless, all of them are embraced within ten

chapters! The careful reader will mark another characteristic. The narrative proceeds in a certain order; and this order reveals a certain distinct purpose. The facts are grouped so as to make some evidently designed impression. So much of this has been noticed that the critics point out that the order is not chronological. But why should we demand chronological order? If the Book is really "written for our learning," should we not expect that matters shall be grouped together, although they are not strictly events one of which happened immediately after the other? In chapter xxv. 19-34, we are told that for twenty years offspring was denied to Isaac and Rebekah. Then God hearkens to Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah is about to become a mother. Before her twin sons are born, however, the election of God is made known to her. "The elder shall serve the younger." When this has been told us, the children are still kept before us. We see them as grown men, and mark their relation to the birth-right—the hope of Abraham and of Isaac—"the Desire of all nations." Then in chapter xxvi., Isaac and Rebekah go down to Gerar. They are apparently still young. At least, there is no indication of the presence of their two sons with them. On the contrary, it is a perfectly natural inference that these are not yet born, since there is evidently nothing to hinder Isaac's representation that Rebekah is his sister being received without suspicion. Plainly, therefore, in order to set Esau's despising of the birth-right side by side with the Divine choice, the Book has

led us onward in chapter xxv. to a point much beyond that which is dealt with in chapter xxvi. This has been seized upon to support the critical theory of different sources. The contention simply reveals how little real insight may underlie critical statements and divisions of Books into "sources." Gunkel has, in his own way, made a full acknowledgment of the existence of a distinct plan in this entire Section. "This circle," he says, "of Jacob-Esau-Laban-Sagas is, therefore, not a loose collection thrown together by the hands of Redactors, but an artistic composition: a series of incidents after the exile" (of Jacob), "and especially the conclusion, which looks back to the beginning, bind the whole together as a unity."*

This Section also appears to be divided into three parts. The commencement of chapter xxvi. runs thus:

"And there was a famine in the land, apart from the first famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar."

Here there is no close connection with what goes before. Chapter xxvi. is not a continuation, in that sense, of chapter xxv. We have, on the contrary, a fresh commencement of the narrative; and it is thus indicated that the first part of The Generations of Isaac ends with xxv. 34. The beginning of ch. xxvii. presents the same features which mark, in this respect, the commencement of chapter xxvi. We read:

* *Genesis*, p. 258.

“And it came to pass that, when Isaac was old and he could not see, he called Esau his elder son,” &c.

Here, again, there is a break in the narrative. The story told in chapter xxvi. does not run into that of chapter xxvii. A new beginning is made, and we have here a new section of this division of the Book. But the reader will observe that, from this point onward, no other break occurs until we reach the end of chapter xxxv., and encounter “The Generations of Esau.” We have, therefore, these three sub-sections: (1), xxv. 19-34; (2), xxvi. 1-35; and (3), xxvii. 1—xxxv. 29.

I. THE ELECTION OF GRACE.

XXV. 19—34.

The reader will notice that, in the story told in Genesis of those three founders of the kingdom of God in the earth—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—each occupies his own place as a revealer of the Divine grace. Abraham is the called out, the separated, **one**; Isaac is the promised one; Jacob is the elected one. Of Isaac’s two children, neither of whom had as yet done good or evil, Jacob is taken and Esau is left. There is thus a distinct progress in the manifestation of the Divine mystery of mercy. In the calling of Abraham there is nothing that troubles us. We see that it is of God; for had He not called, Abraham could never had escaped from the horrors of that idolatrous darkness. But Abraham responds. We note that, while God has His part, man has his part also; and we have no mystery to

wrestle with. With Isaac, the promised one, while all is of God, the mystery is still somewhat remote; it does not overwhelm us. But here with these two children—with these two men—one distinctly taken, the other left, and that choice made, too, in no wise because the former is better than the latter—what can we make of it? Is not this a doctrine to wither hope, to paralyse endeavour, and to silence prayer? Nay, friend; it is inspiration and life. Had Jacob been chosen on the ground of his merit, I might well despair; but with Jacob chosen, without regard to good or evil, I can hope and I can plead. I am nothing; but the God, who redeemed him “from all evil” (Genesis xlviii. 16), can make me everything. The truth that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, makes me hide myself in that mercy.

There is no doubt that the current of opinion has run strongly against Jacob. The deprivation to which Esau is subjected enlists sympathy in his favour; and there is that in Jacob's conduct which evokes our emphatic condemnation. Whether it is to this feeling that we owe a most regrettable mistranslation in both the Authorised Version and the Revised, I cannot say. But, where both speak of Jacob as “a plain man,” the Scripture in the original speaks of him as “a perfect man.”

“And the lads grew: and Esau was a man skilful in hunting, a man of the field; and Jacob was a perfect man, dwelling in tents” (xxv. 27).

Genesis—SECTION IX.—xxv. 19—xxxv. 29.

The English translators have followed the Greek and the Vulgate; but the word *Tâm*, in Hebrew, is always used in a moral sense, and cannot mean “quiet” or “harmless” (as suggested in the margin of the Revised; or “plain” as rendered in the Authorised Version. It means “upright,” or “perfect.” Light is cast upon this by a reference to the words in Hebrews xi. 9, where it is recorded of Abraham that “by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles (tents) with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.” In other words, their “sojourning” was a reality. They kept themselves and theirs apart from the abominations of the land. By *faith*—remembering the destiny to which they were called—they sojourned in the land of promise, *as in a strange country*. They sought no home in the villages or in the cities of the land. They endured the winter chill and the summer heat of the tent, rather than have the comfort and the luxury of an Amorite or Hittite palace with its inevitable accompaniments. Lot might go into Sodom; and Esau may enter into the friendships of, and contract matrimonial alliances with, the inhabitants of the land: but these men “sojourn as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles.” That traditional severance was as faithfully kept by Jacob as it had been kept by Isaac. “Jacob was a perfect man, dwelling in tents.” The grace of God who elected Jacob rested upon him as a lad and as a man.

Another indication of this is seen by the eye of

Jacob Desires, Esau Despises, the Birthright. 97

the careful student even in the incident which is generally written down to Jacob's discredit. That promise to Abraham and to Isaac—"in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"—lives in Jacob's thoughts. To him that is the most glorious of destinies, and the man's soul turns to it with overpowering desire. He sees an opportunity of freeing himself quietly from Esau's rivalry in this matter, and he eagerly avails himself of it. Esau, spent with weariness and hunger, asks for a portion of the pottage which Jacob is preparing. Jacob makes a firm bargain.

"And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright be to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob" (xxv.31,33).

This is written down as "over-reaching," taking a mean advantage of a brother's necessity. I cannot say that I would feel myself justified in repudiating these accusations. But I do feel strongly that we should allow the Scripture to call our attention to the things which it here displays. Jacob prizes that birthright beyond everything else; to Esau, it is less than a mess of pottage! The soul of God's elect is fired with the hope which God has imparted; but "Esau despised his birthright."

*II. ISRAEL AMONG THE GENTILES IN
THE LAND.*

XXVI. 1—35.

Palestine was now subjected to one of those seasons of dearth which have so frequently desolated the country. It was naturally more severe in the higher lands round about Hebron; and Isaac, compelled to provide pasture for his large possessions in flocks and herds, apparently resolved to follow the example of his father, and to seek a temporary asylum in Egypt. He had reached the Philistine city of Gerar on his way when

“The Lord appeared unto him, and said Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws” (xxvi. 2-5).

We seem to have here an indication of the typical character of the Genesis history. Why was Abraham permitted to go down to Egypt, and Isaac forbidden

to follow his father's example? And, above all, why should this be placed on record? When we remember that there was to be but one sojourning of Israel in Egypt, and that God's people were repeatedly warned not to return thither again, a reason is apparent. God's redeemed are not to return to the degradation and the bondage from which He has freed them.

Isaac, however, encountered a similar peril in Philistia to that which Abraham had met with in Egypt. "The men of the place asked him of his wife, and he said, She is my sister" (verse 7). This has been seized upon by criticism, but with its representation of the incident I shall deal in the following chapter. Meanwhile, we mark the significance of the incident here. Among the Gentiles of Canaan, Israel was to be threatened with the very danger which it so narrowly escaped in Egypt—the merging of its life into that of the nations around it. Had Rebekah—the destined mother of Israel—been taken into the harem of the Philistine king, Israel's future would have been lost, as it would have been lost had Sarah remained in the harem of the Pharaoh. And that is the peril which has beset God's people down through all their history. In the land of their possession, as well as in their exile, almost invincible forces have striven to blot out the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, and so to slay Israel's hope.

God guarded Rebekah as He afterwards guarded her descendants. When this was done, the blessing of God fell signally upon His servants:

“Then Isaac sowed in that land, and obtained the same year a hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became great exceedingly” (verses 12, 13).

And now the prosperity of Isaac aroused the envy of the Philistines. This was shown in the attempt which was made to drive him from the district. Water for his herds and flocks was an absolute necessity; and so the wells, which Abraham’s servants had dug, were now stopped. For in verse 15 we must evidently change the pluperfect of the Authorised and Revised Versions into the simple past:

“For all the wells, which his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped them, and filled them with dust (or rubbish). And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we” (verses 15, 16).

Isaac neither resisted nor expostulated. He removed to the valley which led to Gerar. But here, too, the enmity of the Philistines pursued him. The herdmen of Gerar, who were also visiting those distant pastures, contended for the possession of a well of springing water which Isaac’s servants had dug. To the contention about this and another well, subsequently made, Isaac seems to have again yielded. He then passed on to Beersheba. The Lord appeared to him there, and then there came an end to his trouble with his former Philistine friends. The king and his chief

captain came begging his friendship and a covenant of peace; for, said they, "thou art now the blessed of the Lord" (verse 29).

The finding of the well that same day and the naming of the place Beer-sheba, "the well of the oath," which recalls the incident recorded of Abraham (xxi. 31), will come before us again. Let us note now the striking transition shown in closing the Section:

"And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (verses 34, 35).

There is apparently no connection between these words and what goes before. Why, then, are they placed here? The typical interpretation already suggested supplies an answer. Here we have Israel in the land Divinely sustained and blessed, so that even their enemies are compelled to make peace with them; and yet they are saddened by the outlook in their own home. He that, according to the flesh, will come into this Divine inheritance is preparing for a lapse into heathenism! If God raise not up another, the world's cause and God's is lost. "They are not all Israel who are of Israel"—that was to be proved in Israel's after-story. It will be proved again in the Israel of the return. The heir, according to the flesh, will fail: the election of grace will stand.

*III. GOD'S CHOSEN ONE : HIS EXILE AND
HIS RETURN.*

XXVII. 1—XXXV. 29.

The large space given to this third part will be noted. One and a-half chapters are assigned to the first and second Sub-sections, and nine chapters to this third, in which we follow continuously the fortunes of Jacob. Esau had undoubtedly a stirring history. Those four hundred armed men of his, so suddenly summoned when he went to meet his brother, and the rest of the host from which they were taken, had not been gathered round this Hebrew prince for nothing. Battles had no doubt been fought; victories had been won; and possessions had been defended, if not acquired. If it had been the business of the Scripture to heap together stirring narratives, there must surely have been some such in that part of Esau's history. But the Scripture drops a veil over the whole. There were no doubt further incidents also in Isaac's history; but the Scripture is henceforth equally silent regarding him. The life-story in which the kingdom of God is being prepared for, and in which the things of that kingdom are mirrored, is Jacob's, and neither Isaac's nor Esau's.

This part of the history begins badly. Isaac loves the heir according to the flesh, and seeks to secure to him the mighty destiny of the Abrahamic race. The secrecy of the arrangement made by Isaac in-

dicates a conscience not quite at rest. When Jacob blesses his sons, all of them are present; but from this scene of blessing Jacob is to be carefully excluded. Isaac's device is met with still deeper cunning. Jacob secures the blessing by deceit and daring falsehood, which, he himself acknowledged, were sufficient to have called down upon him his father's curse (xxvii. 12).

The first result was the crushing of any earthly hopes which the blessing so obtained may have seemed to secure to Jacob. Esau resolves to slay his brother, and only postpones his vengeance till Isaac's eyes have closed in death. Jacob flees unattended. Resting for the night at Bethel (xxviii.), he sees God in a dream standing on heaven's floor, which is reached by a ladder that springs from Jacob's side. God conveys to him the blessing conferred upon Abraham and Isaac. Will the reader note what lies here under the significant words of Scripture? The angels of God find their pathway on this ladder which connects heaven and earth; and they are spoken of as "ascending and descending" (verse 12). That is surely the reverse of the natural order. The angels' home is on high. They come from the presence of God, and they are discharging His behests. We should have expected, therefore, that they would be spoken of as first descending, and then ascending. It is striking, however, to find that the order which is followed here is strictly preserved in our Lord's reference to this vision in John i. 51; for His words run: "Hereafter ye shall see

heaven opened, and the angels of God ASCENDING AND DESCENDING upon the Son of Man." When we ask why this order is chosen and preserved, the answer seems to be that it lifts the veil from a Divine Guardianship, unthought of by us, but real and persistent. It was the relieving of the heavenly guard that Jacob witnessed! The angels of God had attended him on the way to Bethel. They were around him when he stopped, when he chose his resting-place, and when he laid down his head upon the stone. They were now ascending in order that those descending might take their place. When God makes His covenant with us, there is a revelation of love in the past, as well as in the present and in the future.

In the following chapter (xxix.) an incident is recorded that distinctly challenges the popular estimate of Jacob. He "went on his journey," we read, "and came into the land of the people of the east." In other words, he had crossed the Euphrates, the dividing line which, to the ancient world, separated the East and the West. He notes that a number of flocks are resting round a well. After inquiring whence they were, and learning that they were from Haran, the city which was his destination, he continues:

"Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flock: be gathered together, and till they roll the

stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep" (verses 7, 8).

There we mark a man clear-sighted, capable, who knows his business, and who acts with decision. There is something princely, too, in the bearing of this unaccompanied stranger. We see another side of what is plainly no weak or ignoble nature, when Rachel approaches with her father's sheep. The shepherds, when he first spoke with them, had pointed to her as she came leading her flock. Jacob at once meets the need of the sheep, and so relieves Rachel of care:

"And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father" (verses 10-12).

Had we met with that bright, pathetic picture anywhere else than in the life of Jacob, or even in the life of Jacob anywhere else than here, in such close proximity to the deceiving of Isaac, its touching simplicity and charm would have been freely confessed. It must be admitted also that there is an utter absence of duplicity in Jacob's relations with Laban during the fourteen or twenty years of his

sojourn in Haran. It is clear that Laban appreciates the value of Jacob's shepherd-skill. He has noted how deep his love is for Rachel, how light the heaviest labours are, and how brief even those long years of waiting with that assured prize in view. Laban resolves that this charm shall be made to serve him for another long term; and so, when the time has come for Jacob and Rachel to be wedded, he gives him Leah, and then, with the renewed promise of Rachel, lures him into another long and otherwise unrewarded servitude. In all this Jacob is as clay in the hands of the potter. He has no wiles wherewith to defeat Laban's cunning. The love of Rachel has invested this strong, capable man with a glory of childlike beauty and absolute sincerity; and when Rachel is his at last, he rewards the wily schemer with what he knows will please him, "and served with him yet other seven years" (verse 30).

In xxix. 31—xxx. 24 we are told of the births of twelve of Jacob's children, eleven sons and a daughter. When Rachel's first son, Joseph, is born, Jacob requests Laban to permit him to return to his native land:

"Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee" (xxx. 25, 26).

Here again we are impressed by Jacob's singleness of aim and perfect straightforwardness. Laban is

equally frank in his reply. He urges him to remain with him; for, said he, "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." Jacob consents; but, as father of a large family, he must make provision for his children's future. So Jacob said to Laban:

"Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also? And he (Laban) said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me anything: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire" (verses 29-32).

Laban assents gladly. All that then answered to Jacob's description, and whose peculiarities would probably have been transmitted had they been suffered to remain among the flocks, were separated from them and removed to a distance under the care of Laban's sons. Jacob's reward was thus left, so to say, to chance. That Jacob used his skill as a shepherd to ensure his reward, the Scripture states fully and plainly. That here the former simplicity is exchanged

for something which excites our questioning and does not command our admiration, I cannot deny. But let us not have one standard by which we judge Jacob, and quite another for the judgment of ourselves and of the money-making world around us. There is one thing also, however, which has to be confessed. While Jacob does not enrich himself by either theft or falsehood, and while he keeps strictly to his bargain, Laban's hopes are mercilessly laid in the dust.

“So the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants, and menservants, and camels, and asses” (verses 42, 43).

The inevitable consequences of this were envy and alienation :—

“And he (Jacob) heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold it was not toward him as before” (xxx. 1, 2).

That experience has been repeated in the tragic history of Jacob's descendants. Their capabilities and their unpitied sharpness have been the sowing of dragon's teeth. It will be so again. The tribes of the wandering foot and trembling heart will hear again the cry in every land of their sojourning :

"This is not your rest." But Jacob is not left without direction and comfort in this time of trial:—

"And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee" (verse 3).

Jacob obeys. Rachel, his beloved wife, includes among her preparations for flight the stealing of her father's *teraphim*, the household gods from which counsel was sought in times of perplexity. Laban pursues and overtakes the fugitives at Mizpah, somewhere on the east of the Jordan. God intervenes between Jacob and the angry men of Haran. A covenant of peace is made, and a heap of witness is raised beyond which neither party will thereafter pass to harm the other.

Jacob proceeds southward along the east of the Jordan. On the way he has a vision which explains the past and assures him for the future.

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim" (xxxii. 1, 2).

The name means "two camps." Round Jacob's camp there was another: the angels of God surrounded him and his. Therefore was it that Laban's anger wrought no injury to Jacob, and Esau's wrath would prove as powerless to harm him. As he is now approaching his brother's neighbourhood, he sends messengers to announce his arrival to Esau, and to

convey his greetings. The man, now long accustomed to war, sends no reply, but sets out with 400 armed men. Knowing what this means, Jacob's messengers speed back with their evil tidings. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed" (verse 7). He makes arrangements in which we mark—but mark for the last time in Jacob's history—the subtle ability of this resourceful man. He is passing into the furnace in which that dross will be purged. For, when he has done all to meet the dangers of the morrow, he realises that he has accomplished nothing. He crosses the Jabbok again so that he may be alone with God. He had already lifted his cry to Jehovah. It would seem that, in the midst of his preparations, he had ceased for a moment, and poured out his soul in supplication:—

"And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant" (xxxii. 9, 10).

He had intreated God to deliver him from Esau "lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." But all had not been enough; and he felt as if his cry to God were still unuttered. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day"

(verse 24). Jacob refused to let Him go until He blessed him.

"And He said unto him, What is thy name? and he said Jacob (supplanter). And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob (supplanter), but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (verses 27, 28).

The mark of that marvellous meeting was left, not only in the prophecy of triumph (fulfilled on the morrow in the encounter with Esau, and all through Jacob's after career), but also in a changed nature. Never again do we meet with that old supplanting subtlety. We find instead the simplicity and the trust in God that are the outstanding characteristics of the renewed nature.

After the reconciliation with Esau (xxxiii.), Jacob crossed the Jordan and entered the land of promise. He settled in the neighbourhood of Shechem. "He pitched his tents" before the city of Shalem—not entering the city, but continuing the traditional separation between the seed of Abraham and the people of the land. All in Jacob's household however were not so minded.

"And Dinah, the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land" (xxxiv. 1).

She broke through the wholesome custom of her house, and treated the daughters of the Canaanites as if they were sharers of the faith and the hope of

the called of God. The result to her was pollution and eternal shame, and, to those who dishonoured her, extermination. In the closing chapter of the Section (xxxv.) Jacob is called of God to Bethel, the place where his old vow was waiting to be redeemed.

“And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau, thy brother” (xxxv. 1).

The real entrance into the land of possession was there. Jacob felt what that summons meant. It was a call to cleansing and to consecration.

“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: and let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem” (verses 2-4).

The earrings were probably in themselves idolatrous symbols, made in the form of animals or of gods. That the surrender extended to the giving up of these, indicates how sincerely Jacob's following made answer to his demand that they should prepare themselves for the worship of the one living and true

God. There he and they were accepted of Jehovah. The Divine covenant is renewed with Jacob, whose name is once more solemnly changed to Israel. The Section closes with the birth of Benjamin and the anguish and death of Rachel. With this crowning sorrow Jacob enters upon the inheritance. Isaac dies, and is buried by Esau and Jacob; and the leader of God's people is no longer Isaac, but that son whom he had thought to shut out from this best of earthly inheritances.

The three parts into which the Section is divided tell, therefore, a continuous story. In the first (xxv. 19-34) we learn that it is not he, to whom men's eyes naturally turn in expectation, who will inherit the blessing. That inheritance will not be the portion of the Israel after the flesh: it is reserved for the Israel elected of God. Then follow two views of Israel outside the inheritance. The first is given us in Isaac's wandering in the neighbourhood of the land; the second in the exile of Jacob who is driven from the land. If we add to these Abraham's sojourn in Egypt, we should have a threefold exclusion. There were to be three periods of exclusion for Israel, (1) the sojourn in Egypt, (2) the Babylonian captivity, and (3) the dispersion which still continues. To each of these we have a return. In the first and second instances, the return is with honour. Egypt poured her wealth upon Israel as it did upon Abraham; and Persia acknowledged in the returning Israelites those whom the Lord had blessed, just as Abimelech and his chief captain confessed:

"We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee" (xxvi. 28). In the third, Jacob escapes from envy, is beset with dangers behind and before, and enters the land to meet the great trial of his life. It was "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah xxx. 7). The predictions of the Bible make it plain that the ending of the present dispersion will be after that very pattern.

CHAPTER II.

A PROPHECIC FORECAST.

THE typical interpretation of Scripture History is not suited to every condition of Christian attainment.

There is milk for babes, and strong meat for the mature (1. Corinthians iii. 1, 2; Hebrews v. 13, 14). I print this chapter, therefore, in smaller type. Those for whom its contents have no attraction can pass on to the next. Others will require no urging to scan these pages. They love the Interpreter's House, and they value everything that affords them a hint of the meaning of the pictures with which that House is adorned.

Let me say that what follow are mere suggestions. I believe them to be well-founded; but of that the Bible student will have his own opinion. It will seem strange to some that Jacob should be regarded as having a place in the typical manifestation of the Trinity; but there can be no doubt that such a place is assigned to him in Scripture. Christlieb* has long ago pointed out that the name, by which God revealed Himself to Moses at Sinai, refers to the triune character of the Godhead: "I am the God of thy father, the

* *Moderne Zweifel am Christlichen Glauben* (Modern Doubt and Christian Belief), Lecture iv. (p. 260, English Translation.)

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . . And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you. This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations" (Ex. iii. 6, 15).

To what does this solemn announcement point? Does it indicate that the mystery of the Divine nature was in some way set forth in the relationship and the history of these men? The reader will observe the repetition of the name "God" along with the name of each of these three men. Did they present types of the Persons in the Godhead, so that when God named Himself thus, it could be said that the revelation was complete and final—God's name for ever, His memorial unto all generations?

It is striking that, for three generations, neither fewer nor more, the chosen seed was confined to one individual. There is no doubt that one purpose of this was to write, upon the very foundations of the history of this people, that God is the God of the individual as well as the God of the race. But this number three, and the repeating of the word God with the name of each of these men in Exodus iii. 6, 15, lead us to ask whether there was anything in their history which made them types of the Persons of the Godhead. That question has one significant reply, as we have already seen, in the offering of Isaac. There we have clearly types of the Father and of the Son in the work of the world's redemption. The Father gives up His Well-beloved. The Son surrenders Himself utterly. That identification prompts the suggestion that the Holy Spirit may find His type in Jacob; and a moment's consideration will show that the notion is not without foundation. When the Father was revealed in the Old Testament dispensation, there were spiritual fruits in the individual life, but no spiritual Church resulted. When the Son was revealed, further light was shed; the word was with power; nevertheless the Church was not yet born. But when

the Spirit was manifested, the Spiritual Brotherhood sprang up, and the Church was gathered out of all nations. That history of the manifestation of the Triune God and its results is, step by step, chapter by chapter, the history of these three Patriarchs. The results of Abram's and of Isaac's existence upon the earth do not take us beyond the individual. No Divinely-called and separated *community* springs from either. Their existence is preparing the way for that longed for end, but it does not reach it. When Jacob, however, appears, the elected brotherhood springs up. They go down among the Gentiles still few in number—only seventy souls. But soon they so multiply that their enemies are astounded and terrified. Persecutions are tried to diminish and to extirpate them; but the more they are persecuted, the more they increase. Is not that the history of the Christian Church, when men were forced to acknowledge that the blood of the martyrs was seed sown in the earth that soon sprang up in a bountiful harvest?

If we now take this key with us—that Jacob is the representative of the Spirit, and the Jacob-period the emblem of the period of the Spirit's manifestation and work—we shall find it unlock quite a treasure-house of Divine teaching. We mark, first of all, that in Leah and Rachel we have the Gentile and the Jewish Churches. Israel, like Rachel, was loved from the beginning. She was long and patiently toiled for. Her week was fulfilled. But the end was disappointment, deep and bitter. Rachel was refused. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. When Paul returned to Jerusalem full of zeal for the conversion of his countrymen, the Lord appeared to him while he prayed in the Temple, and said: "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me." And when Paul still pleaded for permission to try, the final word was spoken: "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts xxii. 17-21). Paul came, indeed, to see in this check the glory of the Divine counsel. The wrath of man should praise

God here also. Had the Jew come in, he would have possessed from the first overwhelming influence in the Christian Church. It would have been the Jew first, and the Jew always. The Gentiles would have been, like the inhabitants of the spared Canaanite cities, hewers of wood and drawers of water. But now that the Jew goes, the Gentile will come into immediate touch with the Lord Jesus and with the Father. He will realise that he is loved and trusted as fully as the Jew ever was, or could be. And thus, in the end, there will be in the earth the perfect brotherhood that God has planned and man has sighed for. The Gentile has entered the Kingdom because he was called through the Jew. And the Jew will come in at the end because his way has been prepared through a Gentile ministry (Romans xi. 20, 21). But Rachel, though she is refused, is not abandoned. Jacob, for the love he bears her, will complete her week also. How much misunderstanding of God's present relationship to Israel, and His intentions toward that people, would the Christian Church have been spared, if this parable, imbedded in Jacob's history, had been understood!

To have so much light thrown upon God's purpose is of untold value to us; but does the disclosure end there? Have the after events which are recorded no further light to shed? In the Seven Epistles contained in Revelation ii. and iii., many have seen a description of seven great epochs in the history of the Christian Church. Ephesus is the Church of the Apostolic age, which had a mighty duty to discharge in preventing the blending of the true and the false in the Revelation which was to be handed down to after times. And though in the end it fell from its first love, it manfully performed the duty assigned to it: "Thou hast tried them who say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars" (Revelation ii. 2). The Second Church is Smyrna, the Martyr Church, which, as we know, swept on through imprisonment and loss of all things and death itself to its glorious triumph (verses 8-11). The Third is Pergamos

(verses 12-17). This is evidently the Church of the triumph. Feted and crowned, it is forgetting that, though upon the world's face a beaming smile has displaced the former deadly frown, the world's heart is unchanged. Pergamos has to be told that it is dwelling where Satan's throne is, and that his habitation is there still. There are springing up, too, within its own borders, teachers of false doctrines that are forerunners of destruction. In Thyatira, the Fourth period (ver. 18-29), we have the regal Church usurping authority, and putting forth blasphemous pretensions: "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols." That name sheds a lurid light upon this terrible epoch. Jezebel, the daughter of the high priest of Baal, mounted the throne of Israel as Ahab's bride. Bending the weak king to her evil will, she used the sword to smite the prophets of the Lord, and to supplant the worship of Jehovah by the worship of Baal and of Asherah, "the Queen of heaven." To accomplish her aim, this Jezebel claims, too, to be the only interpreter of the Divine will: She "calleth herself a prophetess." It is hers to speak: it is the place of all besides to listen and to obey. Who can fail to discern the work and the full-blown pretensions of so-called Christian Rome?

After Thyatira there seems to be a prolonged pause. It is indicated that the state of things then introduced will continue to the end; for the Lord speaks there of His coming and His judgment. An appeal, too, is made to those who are in Thyatira, but who are not of it—"unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine"—and to these direction is given, and promise is made. Sardis (iii. 1-6), the next, is plainly the Church of a dead Protestantism. "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." There is in it, however, a remaining spark of life—a holy and faithful remnant. "Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, who have not defiled their garments." They are the hope of the time; the

The Seven Epochs of the Church. 119

initiators of another and better age. The Sixth is Philadelphia (verses 7-13). This is the Mission Church—the Church of “the open door.” We know how, for more than a century now, one door has been opened after another before the gospel messengers. It has been the day of gospel opportunity; and it is an opportunity which is but for a time. For He Who describes Himself as “He Who openeth and no man shutteth,” adds also: “and shutteth, and no man openeth” (verse 7). The Seventh, and last, is Laodicea (verses 14-22), a Church with a lofty notion of its superiority and fulness of all things, but which is lukewarm, and “poor and blind and naked.”

Now it is striking to note that, in our history here, Leah has *seven children of her own*. Two besides were claimed as hers, because they were borne to Jacob by her handmaid, Zilpah. We shall find that these also, strangely enough, have their part in this prophetic forecast of the Church's history. Let us place in parallel columns the Revelation prophecy, and the types in this Jacob-Leah history:

LEAH'S CHILDREN.

THE EPOCHS OF THE GENTILE CHURCH.

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| <p>1. REUBEN, of whom Jacob said, “Thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power” (Gen. xlix. 3).</p> | <p>1. EPHESUS, the Apostolic Church, to which this part of the description of Reuben applies admirably.</p> |
| <p>2. SIMEON — “hearing.” “And she (Leah) said, Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, He hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon.”</p> | <p>2. SMYRNA, the Martyr Church. There is little in the references to Simeon in Genesis to show the parallel here, further than in the name. It was because the Lord heard the Church's cry in those days of her anguish, that she was not only preserved, but also triumphed. The martyr-</p> |

LEAH'S CHILDREN.

3. LEVI, a name notably connected with the priesthood and the Israelitish ritual.

4. JUDAH, the Ruler.

THE EPOCHS OF THE GENTILE CHURCH.

period was indeed the "Simeon" of the Church—the day of "hearing."

3. PERGAMOS, the period during which the ministry of the Church became a separate class, into whose hands the control of Church property and of worship gradually passed; during which also the simplicity of the early worship was supplanted by an elaborate ritual, and during which faith was degraded by superstitious veneration of martyr shrines and trust in the efficacy of martyr relics.
4. THYATIRA, the day of priestly pretension and of the Church's lordly supremacy.

The student of Church history will be specially impressed by the fact that the third and fourth epochs find so clearly their representatives in Levi and Judah. The development of ritual and of ecclesiasticism formed a very marked period in the early Church. Speaking even of the interval between the years 117 and 193 A.D., Gieseler writes: "As the prevailing desire was now to compare the Mosaic institute with the Christian, of which it was regarded as the type, and to trace out an analogy even in their individual features, the idea soon occurred to the mind of comparing the Christian officers in the Church with the Mosaic priesthood, and of giving them the very same titles."* Another writer says: "Most interesting has it been to me . . . though not without its sadness, to trace the characteristic features of the Church of Christ in its

* *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i., pp. 169, 170.

primitive and apostolic state; and then to mark how its grand and spiritual simplicity, preserved awhile after the departure of the apostles, began even in the earliest centuries to be marred by the doctrines and inventions of men, and to be overlaid with imposing but superstitious ceremonials."* The Levi period is most emphatically marked. That of Judah is not less so. Referring to the immense impression made upon the world by the General Councils of the Church when it had won its triumph, Milman says: "The bold impersonation, the Church, seemed now to assume a more imposing visible existence. Its vital principle was no longer that unseen and hidden harmony which had united the Christians in all parts of the world with their Saviour and with each other. By the assistance of the orthodox Emperors, and the commanding abilities of its great defenders, one dominant form of doctrine had obtained the ascendancy; Gnosticism, Donatism, Arianism, Manicheism, had been thrown aside; and the Church stood, as it were, individualised, or idealised, by the side of that other social impersonation, the State. The Emperor was the sole ruler of the latter, and, at this period, the aristocracy of the superior clergy, at a later the autocracy of the Pope, at least as the representative of the Western Church, became the supreme authority of the former. The hierarchical power, from exemplary, persuasive, amiable, was now authoritative, commanding, awful."†

We have seen that the Thyatira epoch was evidently to endure for a considerable time. It is striking, therefore, to find that, though we are being shown the same periods here from a somewhat different side, there is also a long interval between the Fourth and the Fifth of Leah's own children. This period of waiting is bridged by a device of Leah's. When she saw that children were no longer given to herself, she prevailed upon Jacob to espouse Zilpah, her handmaid (xxx. 9, 10).

* G. A. Jacob, D.D., *The Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, p. 326.

† *History of Christianity*, vol. iii., pp. 268, 269.

“And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher [‘blessed’]” (verses 10-13).

Where our translators have rendered “A troop cometh,” we ought to translate rather, accepting as they did the marginal reading of the Hebrew, “Good fortune cometh.” The name “Gad” means “Good fortune.” These two were the sons of Zilpah; and here, again, we recollect with surprise that there were two facts in connection with the long Thyatira period—the domination of Papal Rome—which find in the above their fitting types. There was first a vast extension of the Church in the conversion of the Barbarians, who had poured into the Western Empire and overthrown it; of the Franks and the Germans; of the inhabitants of Ireland and of Britain, South and North. This mighty work was done—not by effort on the part of the Church represented by its leaders, or by the wise direction of its huge and powerful resources—but by the work of individuals that, humanly speaking, was self-originated and self-directed. These were not the Church, though they were of its household. The child was Zilpah's, and not Leah's, though it was born upon Leah's knees; and this offspring might well have been named Gad, and hailed with the acclamation: “Good fortune cometh.”

The other event to which I refer was the spiritual quickening which preceded the Reformation, and which prepared the way for it. This is, indeed, the most notable movement in connection with the long Thyatira reign. It was not confined to any one district or country; nor did it form the work of any one man. The Spirit of God was moving upon the face of the waters. Many men toiled and suffered in the thick darkness—a glorious brotherhood that will yet shine as

the stars for ever and ever. This, again, was not the result of any authorised endeavour. It was the work of men who were in the bosom of the Church, and the Church frequently lent it encouragement so long as the effort was restrained within what it regarded as proper bounds, though it was cruelly repressed when these bounds were judged to be exceeded. The need for reform was fully admitted; and the longing of thousands for light and larger conformity to the Divine will was approved; but, once more, the effort was not the work of the Church, but of individual men within the Church. This, too, was Zilpah's child, not Leah's. And no name could have suited the movement so well as this—*Asher*, "Blessed." Do we not hear in Leah's cry: "Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed," the ring of joyous anticipation of the coming wave of blessing, that was to clothe the Church again in Her pristine beauty, and to refresh and expand Her dry and withered heart with the early joy and spiritual strength?

To Leah herself three more children were then given. Do these also serve as types of the Church's history?

LEAH'S CHILDREN.

THE PERIODS OF THE GENTILE CHURCH.

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| <p>3. ISSACHAR, "There is an hire."</p> | <p>5. SARDIS, the period of dead Protestantism, when "one of the priest's offices" was sought that a man might eat a piece of bread.</p> |
| <p>6. ZEBULUN. The word means "honour."* "My husband will honour me," said Leah.</p> | <p>6. PHILADELPHIA, the Church of latter-day missions and of marvellous triumphs.</p> |
| <p>7. DINAH—"Judgment." Dinah "went out to see the daughters of the land." The result was her shame and ruin, and the destruction of her seducer and his kindred.</p> | <p>7. LAODICEA—"Judgment for the people." A vain, womanish, Church, lacking in manly decision and manly vigour; entering into relations with the world that prove to be her degradation, and that bring judgment upon those who have defiled the Temple of God.</p> |

* See *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., p. 279.

The above comparisons tell their own tale. The number seven in each case arrests the attention of the Bible student; and the suggestions supplied by the names and by the historical incidents connected with them, certainly deepen the impression that the correspondences are not accidental. It now remains to inquire whether *Rachel's* history sheds any light upon the history of the kingdom of God in Israel, whose type she appears to be. It will be remembered that Leah's device of persuading Jacob to espouse Zilpah, was an imitation. Rachel, having no children of her own, and despairing of offspring, gave Bilhah, her maid, to Jacob. The handmaid's children in this case preceded those of her mistress. Bilhah's first son was Dan—"judging." That name impresses us to begin with. Not until the long withheld "judging" fell upon Israel's idolatry in their terrible overthrow, and in the captivity in Assyria and Babylon, was there any appearance in the nation as a whole of an abiding acknowledgment of God. But, from the time of the return, the old passion for idolatry never re-appeared in Israel. That beginning of better things was not, however, the result of the Spirit's gracious influences gradually but steadily raising the people. It was not the outcome of the onward progress of Israel. It was the fruit of God's "strange" work. The "judging" did not come as the result of the nation's seeking; it was God's answer to the cry and the pleading of the few who, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, were in the nation but not of it. Jewish Society wrote these men down as fanatics. Dan was Bilhah's child, and not Rachel's.

A second son was born in Rachel's household before she herself knew the joy of motherhood. "And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister and prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali" ["my wrestling"] (verse 8). Before Israel could bring forth the long-desired fruit unto God, more had to be accomplished than the burning out of the old idolatry. The people themselves must take a stand for God, and must cease to be merely clay in the

hands of the Potter. God seeks for intelligent, willing, co-operation and loving fidelity, and not for mere submission only. This was accomplished in that terrible persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes, the type of the Antichrist, that last and greatest human foe of God and of His Church. The Jew had then either to deny God or to surrender himself to torture and death. Here, again, the right answer came; but not from the rulers, nor from the nation as a whole. It was the answer of the few. But their sufferings proved to be the seed of a better time. Israel afterwards saw a glory in those martyrs which outshone all earthly splendours; and the nation awoke for the first time to a sense of its destiny. It was Bilhah's son; but in its arrival Rachel, so to speak, saw her mission, and she claimed the offspring for her own. "With great wrestlings"—Israel was now striving to retain what she at last recognised as the priceless treasure of the knowledge of the living God—"have I wrestled with my sister"—Leah represents, as we have seen, the Gentile—"and have prevailed." The day of Israel's gracious visitation was now at hand. The way is prepared for Rachel's children.

Rachel's first son is Joseph. We have already seen that the history of this son of Jacob is a complete parallel to the history of Jesus of Nazareth.* He is the beloved of his father, and the father's affection is fully returned. He has early intimations of a mighty future. He is to be king of his father's house. All this is an unbearable burden to his brethren, and they resolve to murder him. He is consigned to the pit, but is released from it. He passes down to Egypt and becomes the saviour of the Gentiles. By-and-bye his brethren seek this great helper of men in their need. After severely trying them, he makes himself known to them as their long-lost brother, Joseph; and, as their brother, he relieves and blesses them, brings the whole family down to Egypt's fulness, and proves himself the saviour of Israel, as he had previously shown himself to be the saviour of the

* Introductory Volume (Marshall Brothers, 3s. 6d.), pp. 214-217.

Gentiles. This picture speaks for itself so unmistakably that I need not encumber the reader with an interpretation. Rachel has given us Joseph: the Jewish people have enriched and blessed the nations by giving us Jesus.

But Rachel will yet bless the house of Jacob and the world with another son—the son of her anguish. Jacob returns to the land to claim the possession. Rachel accompanies him. Just after they had purified themselves at Bethel, and God had renewed His covenant there with Jacob, came the day of Rachel's trouble. Rachel dies in giving birth to her second and last child. "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni ['son of my anguish']; but his father called him Benjamin" ["son of the right hand"] (xxxv. 18). The day will come when the Jew will return, like Rachel, to the land promised to the fathers. But there the old Israel will die, and the new Israel will be born—the Israel of the Divine ideal. In that day the Jew will take his long-promised place. Ben-oni will become Benjamin—the son of Rachel's anguish will be the Son of God's right hand.

CHAPTER III.

THE CRITICAL PARTITION OF THE SECTION.

DR. DRIVER is generally regarded as one of the moderate critics. Those who are acquainted, however, with the writings of this school are quite aware that, in his acceptance of the so-called critical results, he is not one whit behind the chiefest of his brethren. In his recently-issued book on Genesis, this Section (xxv. 19—xxxv. 29) is divided into no fewer than seventy-two fragments, which the critics

imagine have been pieced together by some miraculously-endowed editor in order to form the one continuous history, the perusal of which we have just finished. Alleged selections from P, and E, and J, and R succeed each other with bewildering rapidity; and the work of the commentator upon Genesis is no longer to illustrate the history, and to impress the lessons, of the Scripture; but to detect the joinings, and to pick out the pieces, of this supposed elaborate fabrication. One asks, with amazement, why men with such convictions should spend their time upon a thing like that!

I do not dwell upon the fact admitted by all who are acquainted with literature that, if Genesis *were* the patch-work which the critics believe it to be, it would now be utterly impossible to separate the work of the writers. There are books published in our own time, which are confessedly the work of more than one author; but any literary man would as soon contemplate an expedition to the moon as embark upon the labour of separating the portions which were the work of each contributor. And, indeed, only a madman would believe it possible that he could succeed in work of the kind. When it is added that the critics have to deal, not with books belonging to their own time and written in their own language, but with a literature belonging to a period separated from their own by 3,400 years, and in a language that has ceased to be spoken for more than 2,000 years, one will not wonder that men of the highest literary eminence regard the

critical pretensions as an insult to—I might even say as an outrage upon—common sense.

It may be well, however, to lay before the reader one or two instances of how the critical work is done. To begin with, doubt is cast upon this entire Section of the history. "Isaac appears throughout," writes Dillmann, "as the pale copy of his father." * "No one of the three sources," he says, "has much to tell of him, and what is told is exactly paralleled in the narratives of the life of Abraham." Wellhausen, on the other hand, thinks that Isaac was the original hero of the legend, and that Abraham is the copy. These suggestions have that dash of plausibility about them which has helped so much in winning for the higher criticism its temporary triumph. To quote Dillmann again, "There is the unfruitfulness of his marriage at first, his wife's exposure to danger, the respect paid him by Abimelech, the strife regarding wells with the people of Abimelech, and even the domestic unpleasantness arising from the dissimilarity of his two sons—all repetitions of Abraham's history." †

If this plan of summing up a career should ever be applied to ordinary biography, the results will be equally astonishing. Were the life of a critic, for instance, to be sketched in similar fashion, and were we told that he passed through the gymnasium of his native town, went to the University, published a theological treatise, was elected to a Professorship, married, and had two sons whose dissimilarity re-

* *Genesis* ii., p. 189 (English translation). † *Ibid.*

sulted in domestic unpleasantness, there might be many a "pale copy," and occasion might be afforded for a discussion as to which was the original and which the copies. When we turn, however, to the history itself and analyse it in rational fashion, we are amazed at the critical suggestion. Where shall we look in Isaac's history for any parallel to Abraham's surrender of father-land and kindred? What incident in Abraham's home life is repeated in the deception practised by Jacob upon his blind father? And what is there in Isaac's career that repeats Abraham's expulsion of Hagar and her son, or the death and burial of Sarah, or the bargaining with the sons of Heth? There are other incidents, such as the sacrifice of Isaac in Abraham's history, and in Isaac's the intention to endow Esau, and Rebekah's intervention on behalf of her younger son, which will also occur to the reader. This talk about the "pale copy" is one of those rapid and shallow generalisations which have a charm for certain minds, but whose worthlessness becomes apparent to patient and honest inquiry.

The insufficiency of the pretexts which are put forward for the breaking up of the Scripture is illustrated by the following. The reason for Jacob's flight, which is given in xxvii. 41-45, namely, his brother's thirst for vengeance and the consequent advice of his mother that he seek a temporary asylum with her brother in Haran, is assigned to J. Rebekah's explanation to Isaac that she wishes Jacob to depart that he may marry among their

kinsfolk, and not among the Canaanites (verse 46), is given to P. And why must two authors be introduced? Because the two reasons, say the critics, do not hang together! It is quietly assumed by this sapient criticism that it was impossible that Rebekah should present one side of the matter to Jacob and quite another side of it to his father, Isaac! And yet it is upon arguments of that sort, so utterly wanting in sanity, that this daring breaking up of the sacred text has proceeded. Dr. Driver appears to be ashamed of this critical "discovery"; for he tacitly admits the cogency of the reply which orthodox scholars have urged from the first. "Men," he says, "often act under the influence of more motives than one; and Rebekah may not have mentioned to Isaac her principal motive for wishing Jacob to leave his home. But," he adds, "presenting, as this paragraph does, all the literary marks of a hand different from that of the author of xxvii. 1-45, there can be no question that it forms part of a different representation of the current of events."* But Dr. Driver's pages will be searched in vain for proof. Instead of "all the literary marks" of a different hand, there is not one which distinguishes verse 46 from verse 45. The manner in which Rebekah brings to bear upon her son and her husband the considerations which are calculated to bend each to her will, belongs to the portraiture of one strongly-marked individuality. When we couple verses 45 and 46 together, we see again the very woman whose

* *Genesis*, p. 262.

acquaintance we have already made in the account of her counselling of Jacob. There are here the same marked capability and unscrupulous dexterity. It is the same Rebekah, endless in resource, and brushing aside the moral difficulties which would have arrested a more conscientious nature.

But, if judgment must go against the critics here for their lack of insight, the absence of real study, on their part, of the documents which they presume to divide, is equally conspicuous. The whole of chapter xxvii. up to verse 45 is assigned, as we have already seen, to J. A new beginning is made with the last verse of the chapter. This is put along with the first nine verses of chapter xxviii., and the whole of this new fragment is given to P. The latter writer, we are told, knows nothing of any family unpleasantness. The form of the legend which he followed contained no mention of the bargain made over the mess of pottage, or of Jacob's stealing his father's blessing. Such is this critical "discovery," which, for its devotees, throws so new and marvellous a light upon the Scripture and makes it quite a new book! But what, then, of the statement—"When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob . . . and that Jacob *obeyed his father and his mother*, and was gone to Padan-Aram" (xxviii. 6, 7)? What do these words—"obeyed his father and his mother"—mean? Is it not clear that P knew that *each* of them had interviewed Jacob; that each of them had counselled and commanded him; that Jacob set out with a two-fold purpose—(1) to save

his life, and (2) to marry among his own kindred; that P is, therefore, acquainted with the facts, the record of which is assigned to J; and that, in one word, there are no varying legends, and but one continuous and consistent history? * The same want of real and competent study is shown in the treatment of xxvii. 46. This verse seems to disappear entirely from Gunkel's text. It is evidently a matter of no importance, and a trouble that it is better to have cleared out of the way! Driver assigns it, as has been already said, to P. But there is one phrase in the verse which, had it been attended to, would have arrested the hands of both Gunkel and Driver. In xxv. 22, we read:

"And the children struggled within her; and she said, If it be thus, why do I live?"

The last words are, literally, "Why, then, am I"; that is, Why do I exist? or, Why do I continue to live? That passage is assigned to J by Dr. Driver and the rest. But there is an expression of the same kind in this 46th verse of chapter xxvii., which he wrenches away from J and assigns to P. We read:

"And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, what good shall my life do me?"

The original runs: *Why life to me?* Here it is plain that we have, not only the same energetic, impulsive,

* See Green. *The Unity of Genesis*, p. 330.

nature, but also a characteristic phrase. If the former belongs to J's picture, why then, not this? If the latter is in P's, why should he not have the former also? Slight as this matter may seem to be, it demonstrates that P and J are fictions; and that we have here a continuous narrative that sets before us personages and facts which God would have His people know to the end of time.

The critical dissection of Jacob's dream at Bethel might almost rank as a work of art. Let me place it before the reader in tabular form. It is divided between two authors, J and E.

GENESIS XXVIII. 10-22.

J's PORTION.

"(10) And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

E's PORTION.

"(11) And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. (12) And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

"(13) And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, the God of thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; (14)

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J's PORTION.

and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt be spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (15) And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. (16) And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

E's PORTION.

"(17) And he was afraid, and he said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. (18) And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took up the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

"(19) And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

"(20) And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, (21) so that I come again to my

E'S PORTION.

father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: (22) and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."

This part of a comparatively brief chapter is thus broken up into half-a-dozen fragments. The suggestion is that J's account is complete by itself, and that E's account may also be read continuously. And, with the exception of one rough place in verse 13, the reader will find that this is so. But there is nothing easier than to break up a narrative in that way. Take the following note, for example, from Dr. Driver's *Genesis*, p. 267. Let us name the columns D¹ and D².

D¹

"The belief in a stone being the abode of a deity or spirit was, and still is, one widely diffused among primitive and semi-primitive peoples.

D²

"The Second Isaiah speaks (Isa. lvii. 6) of libations being offered to sacred stones by the idolatrous Israelites: 'Anciently indeed . . the Arabs worshipped the stone,' says Clement of Alexandria; the classical writers often mention 'anointed and garlanded stones,' on which the passers-by would pour oil, at the same time uttering a prayer; and at the present

D¹

"The sacred standing stone, or 'pillar' (*Mazzēbāh*), so often mentioned in the O. T., arose in all probability out of the same belief.

"A *ṣmazzēbāh* of this kind, whether more or less shaped artificially, was in the pre-Deuteronomic period the never-failing accompaniment of the Heb. Sanctuary or *bāmāh* ('high-place').

D²

day, in many parts of India, every village has its fetish stone, in which the spirit of a god or deified man is believed to reside, and which is venerated accordingly by the inhabitants.

"Originally it appears to have corresponded to what we call a 'menhir' (Celtic for a 'long stone'); *i.e.*, it was a natural boulder or block of stone, set up perpendicularly, and venerated by the heathen Semites as the abode of a deity. In process of time artificial obelisks took the place of the natural boulders. Hosea's expression, 'made goodly' (x. 1), implies that in his day there was some artistic workmanship about them.

"It was the symbol of the Divine presence, or *numen*, which was considered in some way to reside in or be attached to it."

Here are six fragments belonging to two accounts

whose independence it will not require any lengthened argument to show. D² is plainly an expansion of D¹, and it is no doubt the work of some disciple of D¹. The student will observe that, in every case D² expands the statements of D¹. The evident air of conscious learning will strike, even if it does not amuse, the reader. D¹'s style is marked, among other things, by the use of the technical words *Maz. xēbāh* and *Bāmāh*, and by an evident desire for brevity shown in the contractions "O. T." for Old Testament, and "Heb." for Hebrew. Not a single instance of such contraction is found in D²; nor is his work marked by the slightest originality. He amplifies, but never initiates.

The breaking-up of documents in that way is much easier than novel-writing, and is almost as fascinating. But let us return to the mangled Genesis-history. The reader will ask, to begin with, why the narrative of the dream should be divided specially between J and E? If we recall what these letters mean—the Jehovist and the Elohist—and glance down the two columns in which the severed limbs of the narrative are displayed, the answer will suggest itself. In verse 12 the word "God" (*Elōhīm*) is found, so that at least must belong to the Elohist, who alone was supposed to apply that name to the Deity. In ver. 13, on the other hand, we encounter the name Lord (*Jehōvāh*), to the use of which the Jehovist was supposed to be similarly confined. In 17, again, we have "God," so that belongs to the Elohist; and so on. But the foundation of all this

has become thin air long ago. It was assumed that one name was older than the other, although the critics changed their mind completely as to which was really the older and which the later. But it has now been proved that both names are older than Abraham. *There was therefore no time when a Biblical writer had to be confined to the use of one name or the other.* Both names were in use from the time the Hebrew was a language; and each had its own place. *Elōhīm* spoke of God in His infinite power, and *Jehōvah* set Him forth as the fulfiller of His word.

But the critics have never been consistent; and they are not consistent here. It will be noted that while "Lord" appears in verse 13, "God" also appears. That passage, therefore, has no more claim to be J's work than it has to be E's. It is the work of both. This also applies to verse 21: "Then shall the Lord be my God." That is assigned to the Elohist, because of the use of the name "God"; but it may equally well be assigned to the Jehovist because of the use of the name "Lord." The grouping together of these names show that we have to do with *one* writer who uses both of them.

But this is merely the beginning of the critical trouble. The word "place" (*makōm*) will be observed in verses 11 (E), 16 (J), 17 (E), and 19 (J). The word, which is plainly used throughout with an accent of veneration, occurs in each of the so-called documents repeatedly, and, therefore, also marks them as parts of one and the same narrative. It will be seen, too, that the words: "How dreadful is

this place," &c. (17), which are given to the Elohist, cannot possibly be understood except in connection with the section (13-16) which has been torn away and given to the Jehovist. It was the vision of *the Lord* (regarding which the so-called Elohist is silent, and of which he is supposed to be ignorant) which has filled Jacob with terror. "This is none other than the house of God" (17) are words which tremble with the awe inspired by the revelation of Jehovah. Another glance at the two columns will remind us that verse 15 is given to J and 20 and 21 to E. But these latter verses repeat the very promise which God has given in verse 15! In the latter (J) God said: "I am with thee and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land," &c. And in 20, 21 (E) Jacob says: "If God *will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go* so that I come again to my father's house in peace," &c. Here E is plainly acquainted with what is recorded in J. The *two* "sources," supplied by writers, each of whom is ignorant of what was written by the other, are consequently an entire delusion.

One other remark may close this review of critical methods. It has been said that certain ingenious and more or less accomplished personages should have long memories. P, it will be remembered, says nothing whatever about the dream and the appearing of God to Jacob at Bethel. He is held to have been in ignorance of these events in the life of the patriarch. But, when we turn to Driver and look

up xxxv. 9, we find these words assigned to P; "And God appeared unto Jacob AGAIN, when he came from Padan-Aram." Here, then, P is aware that God had appeared before that to Jacob at Bethel! The critics' story in regard to the ignorance of E is marked by an equally lamentable inconsistency. Searching our two columns again, we are reminded that J alone knows that God *revealed Himself* to Jacob at Bethel. E, as well as P, is in entire ignorance of the fact, as also of the promise which God made to him. We turn once more to the pages of Driver, where we find xxxv. 1-8 given to E. There, to our astonishment, E's record runs as follows: "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make thee an altar unto God, WHO APPEARED UNTO THEE, when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said . . . let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, WHO ANSWERED ME in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. . . And he built there an altar, and called the place El-Bethel: because THERE GOD WAS REVEALED unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother." What, then, is the conclusion to be drawn from these confessed facts? P was said to have written in ignorance of the dream, and, nevertheless, he knows it quite as well as do J and E. E was likewise asserted to be ignorant of the Divine manifestation at Bethel, which was said to be known to J only. And now that is confessed to be as complete a blunder as the

other statement about P. P, J, and E are, therefore, equally cognisant of these facts; and there is but one conclusion possible after all this critical trouble and turmoil. None of those alleged "sources" has been written in ignorance of the rest. In other words, what have been treated as independent accounts are parts of one and the same continued and complete narrative.

CHAPTER IV.

DIFFICULTIES AND CONFIRMATIONS.

REFERENCE has been already made to the resemblance between Isaac's dwelling at Gerar and the previous sojourn of Abraham in the same territory. It is abundantly evident to everyone that there is nothing strange or improbable in the fact that Isaac, dwelling in the very same region as his father, should have visited the same places. Had he not done so, the critics would doubtless have asked us how we could account for the fact that a prolonged continuation of a sojourn in the same country should not be marked by such repetitions.

But, it is explained, the objection is not that there was a repetition of the sojourn in Gerar. It is that the sojourn of Isaac should be marked by the same circumstances which characterised the previous visit of his father. Isaac is afraid of his life. He fears that he will be slain, and that Rebekah will be seized and taken into the harem of the Philistine

king. So, when asked, he assures the inquirers that Rebekah is his sister. Rebekah is equal to the emergency. She acts in conformity with her husband's statement, and Isaac dwells in the land unharmed. This, it is true, is almost, though not altogether, an exact parallel to Abraham's and Sarah's subterfuge. But that is just what was to be looked for. We now know that it was the practice of that dissolute and tyrannic time in this same region to deal with sojourners in the very fashion that Isaac feared. It was regarded, indeed, as part of the Sovereign's prerogative so to do. Here, again, therefore, instead of finding anything to disquiet us in this incident, we discover that it bears upon the face of it the stamp of the time. We may also note that there the similarity of the two accounts ceases. Sarah was taken into the royal harem, and preserved even there. But the Divine protection was, in Rebekah's case, manifested differently. She was left unmolested, and Isaac was spared the mental agony through which his father had to pass.

But we have not yet escaped from the critics' clutches. Dr. Driver quotes the following from Professor Sayce regarding a further incident, which will occupy our attention immediately: "Doubtless history repeats itself; disputes about the possession of wells in a desert land can frequently recur, and it is possible that two kings of the same name may have followed one another on the throne of Gerar. But what does not seem very possible is that each of these kings should have had a 'chief captain of his

host' called by the strange non-Semitic name of Phicol (xxi. 22; xxvi. 26); that each of them should have taken the wife of the Patriarch, believing her to be his sister; or that Beersheba should twice have received the same name from the oaths sworn over it."* Professor Sayce has laid the Christian Church under so heavy an obligation in this trying time that it is grievous to be compelled to take any exception to his statements. In one particular, however, the above is lacking in due care. As I have just pointed out, "each of them" (the two kings of Gerar) did *not* "take the wife of the patriarch, believing her to be his sister." Rebekah was not taken at all; and in this latter case the king was made aware of the deception practised upon him in a way that was entirely different from that in which light came to his predecessor. In Abraham's case the king was warned by a dream, and by a Divine visitation, which fell upon his house. In the latter instance, there is no dream and no judgment. The king draws an obvious conclusion from what passes under his own eyes.

But what, it will be asked, of the names Abimelech and Phicol? There were at the very least over forty, and possibly even sixty or more years between the two visits; and, though it may not have been impossible, it would be a somewhat daring contention to maintain that the Abimelech and the Phicol of Isaac's time were the same individuals who had made the acquaintance of his father. But here,

* *Early History of the Hebrews*, p. 64.

again, some things have been overlooked. In 1. Samuel xxi. 11, we are told that David "went to Achish, king of Gath," another Philistine monarch. But the title of Psalm xxxiv. runs thus: "A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour *before Abimelech*: who drove him away, and he departed." The reader will note the obvious inference. As with the Pharaohs of Egypt and the Emperors of Rome, the Philistine monarchs seem to have had the unchanging title—Abimelech, "my father the king." And as to Phicol, if that too was not an official designation, there was nothing more likely than that a son of the former "chief captain" of Abimelech's army should bear his father's name and be advanced to the position which his father had held.

Quite apart, however, from these considerations, it would be an excess of scepticism to deny the historical character of the narrative, because of the identity of the names. Every Old Testament scholar is aware of an exactly parallel case to this in the much-debated question of the age of the apocryphal Book of Ecclesiasticus. In his preface to the Greek translation, the grandson of the author says that he came into Egypt "in the eight and thirtieth year of Euergetes the king." Here, one would naturally conclude, we have all we require for fixing the date of Ben Sira's visit. But certainty gives place to perplexity, when we learn that there were *two* kings of that name, Ptolemy II. and Ptolemy VII., separated from each other by more than half a century. Special praise, however, is

given in the Book itself to Simon, son of Onias, who was evidently high-priest in the life-time of the author, which would carry us up to about 300 B.C. But here, again, the certainty, which one imagines he has secured, is once more dissipated. There was another and later high-priest, who bore that very name, "Simon, son of Onias." Now, if this occurred in later Jewish history, why should similar incidents in early Philistine history be deemed to be utterly incredible? There is also a difference here which a careful critic would have marked and weighed. In xxi., only Abimelech and Phicol interview Abraham. But, in Isaac's case, he is visited also by a third personage, who seems to be of more importance than Phicol. "Then Abimelech went to him (Isaac) from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army" (xxvi. 26). Ahuzzath was one of the confidential advisers of the king, or, in modern phrase, a member of the Privy Council. His presence may indicate an advance in the ceremonial of the Philistine Court.

A last objection is based upon the re-naming of the wells. That, however, has previously had its explanation in the Scripture itself. We have been already told* (xxvi. 15) that the envy of the Philistines first showed itself in the stopping of the wells, so that Isaac might be compelled to migrate. Their policy succeeded to a certain extent. Isaac removed from Gerar; but, in obedience to the command which he had received from God, he still sojourned

* See page 100.

in the district. We are now told that he frustrated the hopes of his persecutors by either cleaning out the wells which had been stopped after Abraham's death to prevent an incursion like this, or by digging others in their vicinity.

“And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them” (Genesis xxvi. 18).

These were acts of filial affection, which were quite in accord with all we know of Isaac. Sojourning in this region, he was compelled to provide for the necessities of man and beast. The stopped wells had to be re-opened or replaced, and regard for a father's wish, that was sacred in Isaac's eyes, led him to name those centres of blessing as they had been named before. Dillmann reprints Knobel's note, which implies that the writer of Genesis had less acquaintance with Hebrew than German critics in the nineteenth century of the Christian era. The writer is said to treat the word *sheba*, “seven,” as if it were *shebāa*, “oath.” Now a critic ought to have remembered that these two words are distinguished from each other *merely by the vowel-points*, which were added about the sixth century of our era, and that in the original text there was no difference whatever between the words. But, even as it stands, the Hebrew requires no correction. “The-well-of-swear-ing” is a faultless translation of *Beer-sheba*.

The objection, founded upon the incident that a covenant was here made with Isaac as one had previously been made with Abraham, is quite as baseless. The recollection of the fact, that peace had been made there in similar circumstances with his father, was almost certain to suggest a renewal of the covenant with Isaac. It is a striking comment upon all this contention that modern research has taken us back to those ancient times, and that the wells of Abraham and of Isaac have intervened in the controversy! They have preserved for the place its ancient name. "We reached," says Robinson, "'Wady-es-Seba,' a wide water-course, or bed of a torrent. . . . Upon its northern side, close upon the bank, are two deep wells, still called 'Bir-es-Seba,' the ancient *Beersheba*. We had entered the borders of Palestine! Those wells are some distance apart; they are circular, and stoned up very neatly with solid masonry, apparently much more ancient than that of the wells at Abdeh. The larger one is twelve and a-half feet in diameter, and forty-four and a-half feet deep to the surface of the water; sixteen feet of which at the bottom is excavated in the solid rock. The other well lies fifty-five rods W.S.W., and is five feet in diameter and forty-two feet deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance; the finest, indeed, we had found since leaving Sinai. Both wells are surrounded with drinking-troughs of stone for camels and flocks; such as were doubtless used of old for the flocks which then fed on the adjacent hills. The

curb-stones were deeply worn by the friction of the ropes in drawing up water by hand.”*

More recent travellers have amply confirmed Robinson’s account. The late Professor Palmer visited the place in a time of prolonged drought, “when the whole pasture-land was burnt and bare as the desert”; and, nevertheless, even then there were “two wells filled with water.”† “In January, 1884,” writes Henry A. Harper, “Professor Hull, with the exploring party of the Palestine Exploration Fund, visited Beersheba. At the time of his visit, the wâdy in which the ‘wells’ are situated was a watercourse, owing to rains, and the wells only a few yards from the torrent. The old well-sinker knew that the chances of a constant supply were greatest in the low ground which borders a wâdy, and that the water from the wâdy itself would find its way by percolation into the well. Yet these wells are at a sufficient elevation to prevent the torrent-water, which is usually turbid, from getting direct access to the water in the wells. Great judgment was shown in the selection of the site—great skill in the workmanship to cut out of the limestone rock wells of such depth and excellence.”‡ Colonel Conder discovered an Arabic inscription, which shows that the masonry of the wells had been restored in the twelfth century of the Christian era.

In an earlier verse (22) we read that Isaac’s first well, for the possession of which there was no strife

* *Biblical Researches in Palestine*, vol. i., p. 204. † *Desert of the Exodus*.

‡ *The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, pp. 29, 30.

between the herdmen of Gerar and the servants of Isaac, was named Rehoboth, that is, "broad places," where there was no crushing or crowding, but restful quiet and freedom. That we are here in contact with the events of that far-off time we have an unexpected testimony, "One of the wells," writes Professor Sayce, "that of Rehoboth—made by Isaac's servants—is probably referred to in the Egyptian *Travels of a Mohar*, where it is called Rehoburta."* That narrative takes us back to the times of Rameses II. of the 19th dynasty, and shows us Palestine as it was at a period about three centuries later than the time of Moses. The book was specially valued by the Egyptians for its references to places. "Copies of it," writes Budge, "were compiled in such a way that they could be used to teach geography."† But, while Professor Sayce presents us with this valuable testimony, he is equally explicit in the expression of an opinion which, if well sustained, would tell heavily the other way. Genesis records the fact that both Abraham and Isaac had dealings with the Philistines in Palestine. But Professor Sayce assures us that "the Pulsata or Philistines did not appear in that country till the troublous days of Rameses III., of the twentieth dynasty. . . . In saying, consequently, that the kingdom of Abimelech was in the land of the Philistines, the Book of Genesis speaks prophetically: when the story of Abraham and Abimelech was written in its present form, Gerar was a

* *Patriarchal Palestine*, p. 189. † *History of Egypt*, vol. vi., p. 53.

Philistine town; in the days of the patriarchs this was not yet the case.’’*

Putting the matter plainly, then, if that were true, we should have to conclude that when Genesis tells us that Abimelech was king of the Philistines, it affirms that he reigned over a people who had not yet arrived in Canaan, and who did not arrive till many centuries had passed away. If that were an ascertained fact, no kind of explanation could shield the Bible from the charge of misleading its readers as to the history of the period. On what, then, does the Professor’s assertion rest? No one has shown more fully than he how dangerous it is to challenge the statements of the Scripture on the ground of theory. Almost every year yields a fresh harvest of discovery regarding the lands, the times, the nations, and the personages referred to in the Bible; and all of those discoveries have invariably justified Bible statements, and covered those who challenged them with confusion. But this contention is, nevertheless, based simply upon a fashionable theory that the Philistines first entered Canaan when the great confederacy was formed against Egypt which was defeated by Rameses III., about 800 years after Abraham, and 400 years after Moses. Facts have, however, begun their customary work here also. The above theory has been already seriously shaken, and the Scripture has been correspondingly confirmed. In the Tel-el-Amarna letters, which take us up to the times immediately after those of Joshua and Moses,

* *Patriarchal Palestine*, pp. 181, 182.

the king of Ascalon is named. He is called "Dagan-tacala." *The name contains that of the national god of the Philistines, Dagon.** This shows that the Philistines *were already in the land*, and that Ascalon was one of the great Philistine cities *300 years before the time of Rameses III.* But a statement by a great authority carries us up to the time of Abraham himself, and shows that the Philistines were not only already in the land of Canaan in the days of the patriarch, but were also possessed, even in that early time, of a formidable navy. Maspero says: "It is certain that in the earliest period, at least, of their sojourn in Syria, as well as in that before their capture by Rameses III., they (the Philistines) were successful in sea-fights; but the memory of only one of their expeditions has come down to us: a squadron of theirs, *having sailed from Ascalon* somewhere towards the end of the Twelfth dynasty, succeeded in destroying the Sidonian fleet, and pillaging Sidon itself."† Professor Flinders Petrie lends the weight of his name to the belief condemned by Sayce and by Budge in his history of Egypt, and affirms that the settlement of the Philistines in Palestine belongs to very early times—to the times, indeed, indicated "in the tenth chapter of Genesis."‡

One other alleged difficulty claims a moment's notice. Referring to chapter xxvii., Dr. Driver says: "The preceding narrative involves a serious chronological discrepancy. Isaac is, to all appear-

*See *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. iii., p. 349.

† *The Struggle of the Nations*, p. 700. ‡ *A History of Egypt*, vol. i., p. 14.

ance, according to the representation of the narrator, upon his death-bed." He adds that another section of the narrative represents him as surviving for "80 years, dying at the age of 180."* One who challenges the chronology of the Scripture should exercise some care in his own computations. Yet on what is this confident statement based, that Isaac survived another eighty years? If the reader will note the answer to that question he will meet a painful revelation of the recklessness which marks this campaign against the Bible. As Isaac was sixty when Esau and Jacob were born, and seeing that Esau married when he was forty years of age (xxv. 34), Isaac was 100 when his elder son contracted those regrettable matrimonial alliances. Dr. Driver actually concludes that, although these "were a grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah" (ver. 35), the patriarch chose that very year to bless Esau! Can Dr. Driver's readers believe that, while his spirit was still smarting from this blow, Isaac was then and there drawn to invest Esau with the choicest blessings of this consecrated race? With his favoured theory of different "sources," it is a small matter to him that his interpretation throws the Scripture narrative into confusion. But if no time had elapsed between the marriages of Esau and the blessing, how could his mother say: "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth?" (xxvii. 46). What opportunity had there been for the revelation of their characters and for forming a

* *Genesis*, p. 262.

judgment which plainly sees no hope of reversal or even of mitigation? And how has it happened that a Commentator, and an "Examining Chaplain," pronounces judgment upon a passage to which he can have given so little serious study?

According to the very probable chronology advocated by Kennicott* Isaac was 117 years old at the time of his sickness. That he believed himself to be then near his end may be inferred from his words: "Behold now, I am old: I know not the day of my death" (xxvii. 2). Esau's hope and Rebekah's fear equally imply that they were under the impression that the end was not far off. For "Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob" (ver. 41). But let it be observed that *the Scripture* makes no statement of the kind. Its words are: "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said," &c: (verse 1). His powers were failing, and his apprehensions that the end was not far off were real enough. But threatened men live long; and it is no unusual experience, even now, though our life-limit is three-score years and ten, for men in similar case to Isaac's to pass subsequently through a lengthened period of more or less invalid existence.

A quite recent discovery has supplied another proof that the history of these patriarchs shows us the very times in which they lived. Sarah gives

* See *The Speaker's Commentary*, vol. 1., p. 178.

Hagar to Abraham, and Rachel and Leah give their maids, Bilhah and Zilpah, to Jacob. These belong to the ordinary, expected, and customary events of the period. Later on, in Israelitish history, we discover no trace of such a practice. Here, however, the proposal calls forth no remonstrance, and awakes no questioning, on the part of either Abraham or Jacob. Plainly, too, the transactions impart no shock to the community. They are regarded by it also as perfectly natural and right. Bilhah and Zilpah are enumerated in the Scripture, and are honoured by the people of their day, as Jacob's wives. We are compelled to conclude, therefore, that, while it was afterwards not so seen in Israel, Abraham and Jacob belonged to a civilisation in which the practice was perfectly legal, and was sanctioned by long-established custom.

Until lately no light was obtainable upon this matter. But the Laws of Hammurabi, or Amraphel, the contemporary of Abraham, have been discovered and deciphered; and now for the first time we understand this matter fully. It was the custom of the country to which Abraham and Laban's family had belonged. These laws recognise the right of a childless wife to give her maid as a second wife to her husband, and also the husband's right to expect that this should be done.* Nor is this the only light which these newly-recovered Laws shed upon the patriarchal history. We have the very case of Sarah and Hagar legislated for. One section reads

* See §§ 144-145.

thus: If a wife "has given a maid to her husband and she has borne children, afterwards that maid has made herself equal with her mistress because she has borne children, her mistress shall not sell her for money: she shall put a mark upon her and count her among the maid-servants."* The reader will recall Abraham's reply to Sarah when she complained of the indignity put upon her by her maid: "But Abram said unto Sarai, *Behold thy maid is in thy hand: do to her as it pleaseth thee*" (Genesis xvi. 6). In other words, the law had already judged the case: the remedy was in Sarai's own hand. She could not, indeed, sell Hagar for money, but she could "deal hardly with her."

A further demand of Sarah's, made when Ishmael mocked the child Isaac, did not meet with such ready assent from Abraham. "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, because of his son" (xxi. 10, 11). It required a Divine command to Abraham before he consented to send Hagar and Ishmael away. We now understand this at once as we read the following in the ancient laws of Babylonia: "If a man's wife has borne him sons, and his maidservant has borne him sons, the father in his lifetime has said to the sons which the maidservant has borne him 'my sons,' has numbered them with the sons of his wife; after the father has gone to his

fate, the sons of the wife and the sons of the maid-servant *shall share equally* in the goods of the father's house; the sons that are sons of the wife at the sharing shall chose and take."* Sarah is confronted by a real danger. Ishmael *will* share equally with Isaac. The only pre-eminence given to her son is that he shall have first choice; and as she contemplates the future she sees this scornful lad the contemptuous and masterful rival of Isaac. Her own trouble with the mother will be but a small thing in comparison with the trouble of her child. Hence the impassioned resolve and demand: "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." But it "was very grievous in Abraham's sight, *because of his son.*" He had acknowledged him: Ishmael had now a son's place: and the righteous Abraham could not deprive him of it and respect the law. Hence the Divine command. God would assume the care; "and God was with the lad" (Genesis xxi. 20).

Comment is needless. Abraham and his kindred have laws and customs which are not afterwards those of their descendants. These customs and laws *are those of Chaldea*. Abraham, therefore, and Laban's house *had* come from thence, and the Genesis history is here showing us personages, and relating events, which belong to that very time.

SECTION X.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU.

XXXVI. I—XXXVII. I.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONTENTS.

THOUGH Jacob was chosen, and Esau was rejected, as heir to the promise, there was as yet nothing to indicate the Divine decision to the eye of man. Esau is plainly possessed of power and influence to which Jacob can make no pretension. It is by his brother's sufferance that Jacob is allowed to enter the land, and to visit the home of his childhood. And along the after generations the preponderance of the Esau branch becomes more and more marked. The Edomites at once gain a fatherland, and rise to power among the peoples of Palestine. They have great territorial magnates and even kings, while the enslaved descendants of Jacob have their lives made bitter with hard bondage. But what of to-day? There is, in accordance with the prediction of Scripture, "not any remaining of the house of Esau" (Obadiah 18); and Israel, chastised but preserved, are heirs of a grander destiny than

their brother peoples have either achieved or the greatest poet minds imagined.

The difference in God's treatment of His own and of those who do not care to know Him is revealed in the contents of this Section, as well as in the place which the Section occupies in the narrative. Esau is blessed richly, and he is blessed early. The story, so wonderfully summarised in the Section, of this steady and rapidly increasing greatness is told, and is told to its end, before we are suffered to hear the story of Jacob's posterity. An attentive perusal of chapter xxxvi. will discover a marvellously systematic arrangement. We have 1. (verses 1-5) an account of Esau's family before he left Canaan for Edom, just as we shall afterwards have an account of Jacob's family before he goes down to sojourn in Egypt (xli. 8-27). We are told of Esau's wives, Adah, Aholibamah, and Bashemath, and of their sons, the paragraph ending with the words:

“These are the sons of Esau, who were born unto him in the land of Canaan” (verse 5).

Then 2. this brief but complete history records his removal and its reason:

“And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went to a land (away) from the face of Jacob his brother. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers

could not bear them because of their cattle. Then dwelt Esau in Mount Seir: Esau is Edom" (verses 6-8).

They were not lords of Canaan; and, though the right of free pasturage seems to have been recognised as available even for strangers, they could not use it to the exclusion of the cattle of the proprietors of the soil. That is indicated by the words: "the land *wherein they were strangers*." Esau's change of home was accompanied by a change of name. That this means that Esau broke with the traditions of his father's house and became as the people among whom he settled, we dare not say. We know that his descendants bore the name of Edomites, and the land the name of Edom. We also know that Isaac's faith in the one living and true God, if it was conveyed by Esau to his descendants, speedily perished among them, leaving, so far as we are now aware, no trace that it had ever existed. We have to notice, however, that the words "Esau is Edom" have one unmistakable significance. They intimate that the after history deals not with the *personal* career of Esau, but with the story of the people that sprang from him. It now gives 3. (9-14) the names of all of Esau's children, the enumeration being carried to the second generation in the case of Eliphaz, the son of Adah, and of Reuel, the son of Bashemath. Then 4. we have an enumeration of those who became princes among the rapidly-increasing people (15-18). *Alluph*, "Duke," means the princely leader of a family or tribe. The systematic

method in which the narrative proceeds is shown in the words which conclude this fourth paragraph: "These are the sons of Esau who is Edom, and these are their dukes" (19).

5. Part of the earlier inhabitants of the country were evidently incorporated with the Edomite people. The names of these and of the princes who sprang from them are next recorded (20-36); and this paragraph has also a formal ending: "These are the Dukes that came of Hori, among their Dukes in the land of Seir" (30). And now 6. a further extension of the race is indicated, and a new glory described. The Edomites have their kings! They become a power in the land with which the neighbouring peoples have to reckon. The monarchy was evidently elective; for none of the eight kings, who are named, is said to have been the son of, or to have been in any way connected with, the king who preceded him. The successor of the first king Bela, of Dinhabah, for instance, is "*Jobab the son of Zerah of Bosrah.*" They seem also to have been selected from different cities or districts, as if an attempt were consistently made to prevent the regal dignity becoming the heritage of any one family or district.

7. The account concludes with an enumeration of the dukedoms as they existed when Genesis was written (40-43). The former list (15-19) mentioned fourteen; the latter gives eleven only, and no more than two of these (Teman and Kenaz) agree with the names in the former. This will be referred to again in the following chapter. Meanwhile let one

suggestion in this brief, compact, yet marvellously full, Section be noted and weighed. The idea which it conveys has not always been observed, although its light rests upon everything in the Section like sunshine on a valley. One proof of how little the intention of the Scripture has been suspected will be found in the separation of the opening verse of chapter xxxvii. from chapter xxxvi. to which it really belongs. Place the last verse of xxxvi. and the first of xxxvii. together, and the suggestion referred to will be manifest :

“These be the dukes of Edom according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he is Esau the father of Edom. And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.”

That is the note which sounds throughout the entire Section. It rings out clearly in the words: “And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel” (31), as well as here. Edom had its territorial possession, and had assumed its place among the peoples, while he, who had the promises, was still a stranger and sojourner. If we measure the abiding greatness and glory of the people of God by the duration of their waiting, the depth of their abasement, and the intensity of their suffering, how vast the hope which should fire the breasts of those whom God is thus leading to His everlasting rest ! If *their* portion is worth so much more than earthly

wealth and glory that all this must be endured that this portion may not be missed, how incomparably rich and vast must their inheritance be!

CHAPTER II.

THE CRITIC AND THE EXPLORER.

IN chapter xxvi. 34, we are told that Esau married into two Hittite families; and, again, in xxviii. 8, 9, that "Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father," married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. Esau's three wives are again named in the beginning of this Section, but with most remarkable differences. This will be evident from the following lists:

THE EARLIER NAMES.

Judith, daughter of Beer, the Hittite.

Bashemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite.

Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael.

THE LATER NAMES.

Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, the Hivite.

Adah, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite.

Bashemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebayoth.

Here the name Judith is exchanged for Aholibamah, and Beer the Hittite is Anah son of Zibeon, the Hivite; Bashemath becomes Adah; and Mahalath is Bashemath. The differences between two lists of the names of the same persons could hardly be greater; and, in this time of active hostility towards old beliefs, we cannot marvel that these variations have been seized upon and used as

irrefutable arguments against the reliability of the Bible. "This is the most open contradiction," says Wellhausen, "in the whole of Genesis." It was to be expected that such differences would be cited as proofs that the Book is made up of scraps taken from different sources; and so he continues: "Either the entire literary criticism of the Biblical historical books is baseless and nugatory, or these passages are from different sources."*

The value of that "entire literary analysis of the Biblical historical Books" may be accurately tested, therefore, by the accepted critical conclusions upon this very point. On the authorship of these passages, as on other parts of Genesis, the critics have been much divided; but *the accepted conclusion* now is that *all of them belong to P!* The reader will find that Driver assigns them all to this one source with undisturbed assurance. He and the rest who agree with him in that judgment have, therefore, according to Wellhausen, condemned this "entire literary analysis" as "baseless and nugatory." P is said, however, to have gathered his information from different and contradictory sources; but would any man have consented to regard contradictory statements as "information"? A patient study of the names will further convince the reader of the utter futility of the argument built upon these differences. It is quite clear from what we have learned from Genesis that changes in names were by no means of rare occurrence, and that anyone unacquainted with that

* *Composition des Pentateuchs*, p. 49 (see Green, *Unity of Genesis*, p. 420).

fact might draw most misleading conclusions. If no explanation, for instance, had been given of the changes made in the names of Jacob and Esau, and we came suddenly upon "Israel" and "Edom," who were evidently spoken of as being identical respectively with "Jacob" and "Esau," one seeking for proofs of diverse authorship would seize eagerly upon these, and in doing so would blunder as foolishly as the "critics."

But is it possible, it will be asked, to explain the differences in this way? One fact deprives the difficulty of half its force. Anah, the son of Zibeon, as he is named in the later account, is called *Beerî* in the earlier. Now in xxxvi. 24 we have another notice of Anah. We read: "This is that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon, his father." The foregoing is a regrettable mistranslation. Jerome gave long ago what is plainly the correct rendering. What Anah found were not "mules," but "hot springs," in the desert; and so he obtained the name "the man of the well," *Beerî*. The reader will observe that the father's name is not given along with this of "*Beerî*." That designation, by which no doubt he was best known, did not belong to the genealogy. When the genealogy is referred to, as in the latter case where his father's name is recorded, the designation "Anah," under which he appeared in the list, is given.

A fact like that enforces the necessity for caution. A second consideration is that the changes in the names of Esau's wives are too many to be due to mis-

takes of copyists, and they show no sign of mangling of words. The names in the first set are evidently those which the women bore when they were married: the names in the second are those by which they were known when their families were grown up, and when their sons had taken their places as leaders of the rapidly increasing people. Why the names were changed we are not told, and it is now idle for us to inquire. That such changes were customary in the East in ancient times we know; and the custom endured down to a comparatively recent period. Nebuchadnezzar changed the names of Daniel and of his companions. Our Lord changed the names of His disciples. Sir John Chardin, a French traveller of the 17th century, who obtained an intimate knowledge of Persian customs, describes this practice with special fulness. He says: "I have seen many governors of provinces among them (the Persians) assume new names with their new dignity." He then gives an instance of the reigning monarch changing his name. When this was done, he was re-crowned, and all seals and coins that bore the former name were broken. He adds: "The women more frequently change their names than the men. . . . Women that marry again . . . and slaves, commonly alter their names upon these changes." To this quotation, Dr. Green, from whose pages I have taken it, appends the following: "Esau's wives at their marriage left their own tribes to become the heads of a new race; is it strange that they should adopt new names?"*

* *The Unity of the Book of Genesis*, p. 424.

The exchange of the names Hittite, Horite, and Hivite presents no difficulty. The name Hivite did not denote a man of a special race. It is never found in the plural in the original, and it appears to be the name applied to a dweller in a certain district. Ewald translates it as "midlander." A man could therefore be both a Hivite and a Hittite. There is still less ground for the objection which is based upon the name Horite. It means a rock-dweller, and refers simply to the kind of habitation that was used. Similarly we are said to have two "sources" plainly shown in chapters xxxii. and xxxvi. I place the passages referred to in parallel columns.

XXXII. 3 ("J").

"And Jacob sent messengers before his face to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the PLAIN (*Sādēh*) of Edom."

XXXVI. 6-8 ("P").

"And Esau took his wives, and his sons and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan, and went to a land from the face of Jacob his brother. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together, and the land of their sojourning was not able to bear them because of their cattle. And Esau dwelt in the MOUNT of Seir. Esau is Edom."

Dr. Driver, in his note on the former passage, assumes that we have here an indication of two "sources." J knows nothing of Esau's migration after Jacob's arrival in Canaan; and P is under the

impression that Esau was not in Edom *before* Jacob's arrival. In coming to that conclusion the critics have absolutely nothing to go upon but what is under the reader's eye in those two passages. Let me ask him, then, to note whether that conclusion is based upon real study of them, or upon prejudice. In the first passage we have the word *Sādēh*. This means "an extended plain," "a wide expanse," "the open field." What does that word imply? Why is Esau in this extended plain? Does the reader not see at once that the careful use of that word points to this that Esau's flocks and herds were there for pasturage? In the latter passage we learn that, when Esau really migrated with his household's and all his belongings, he did not dwell in "the open field": he betook himself to a place of safety and of strength: he went to "the MOUNT of Seir." The only rational conclusion is that the reference in chapter xxxii. is to a visit in which Esau is availing himself of the pasturage of Seir, and that chapter xxxvi. tells, as it purports to do, of a permanent change of home.

Read in this way, the harmony is perfect. Jacob was the last man to rush blindly into danger. He had doubtless sought and obtained information as to the abode and the movements of Esau. So he does not send to Esau's home. It is the man he must conciliate, and his messengers seek Esau's presence. Then, too, if Esau had already migrated to Mount Seir, Jacob's fear of his brother had little foundation. There was small likelihood of their meeting. But

with Esau's flocks and herdsmen roaming over Canaan, contact was certain. And why did Esau hurry his four hundred men forward to meet Jacob? If his people were still in Canaan, and if he was still using its pasturage for his cattle, his purpose is evident. He was plainly resolved to arrest Jacob's onward march, and to compel his return towards Haran. When God had touched his heart, however, Esau's better nature revived. With a generosity which commands our admiration, he abandoned the pasturages of Canaan available for sojourners to his brother, and made his final settlement in Edom. I repeat that all this shows the harmony which marks true history, and a record that is a unity and not a heterogeneous patchwork. With the critical division, on the other hand, all is dislocation, confusion, and improbability. J makes Jacob attempt to conciliate Esau when there is not the slightest necessity for doing so, seeing that Esau has already cleared out of Canaan, and is located in a distant territory. And P makes Esau display the utmost brotherliness and generosity to Jacob, without any reconciliation whatever having taken place between them!

A more imposing difficulty is supposed to be found in the reference to the kings of Israel. Dr. Driver says that the words: "Before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" show that the writer lived after the beginning of the Israelitish monarchy. "The last-mentioned king will naturally have lived," he adds, "just before the time of Saul."* The

* *Genesis*, p. 317.

above is another illustration of critical methods. Here "*liphnē*" is bound down to the sense "*just before*." This is a daring and unjustifiable attempt to erect a baseless critical opinion into a law of grammatical interpretation. The word is used by Moses simply in the sense of "aforetime," "in times past." In Deuteronomy ii. 10, we read: "The Emims dwelt therein in times past" (*liphanim*), &c. Are we to suppose that they had dwelt in Moab "*just before*" Moses and the Israelites had encamped upon the frontiers of that country?

When Isaac asked Esau to procure venison that he might bless him "*before*" (*liphnē*) his death (Genesis xxvii. 7), the word even there refuses to be rendered by "*just before*"; for Isaac has not the slightest intention to defer his blessing until he is in the very article of death. Nor are we to understand, when we read that "all the plain of Jordan . . . was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah" (Genesis xiii. 10), that the description was true only of that very time. It had been—and the Scripture means us to understand that it had been—the condition of the land for long ages.

Like our own word "*before*," *liphnē* may mean "*just before*," but it may also indicate a quite ancient priority. A consideration of the passage shows how little there is in this criticism of it. There was a king reigning in Edom when the Israelites begged permission to pass through the territory of the Edomites. We have no reason to

imagine that he was the first to whom that dignity had been given. But let us say that he *was* the first. Between that time and the coronation of Saul there were at least four hundred years. Let us suppose further, that the first of these Edomite kings had just begun to reign when the Israelites stood upon the western border of Edom. Dr. Driver assures us that the last of the eight reigned *just before* Saul was made king in Israel. Well, then, those eight kings must have reigned fifty years each. Every successive pair of them reigned an entire century! Where shall we find a parallel to this prodigious longevity? Taking the natural sense of the Scripture, and understanding it to mean that the eighth king was he to whom Israel sent its request, everything is rational. During the 210 years in which the Israelites were in Egypt the Edomite monarchy had come into existence. The eighth king was then reigning; and, allowing an average of, say, twenty years for a reign, the monarchy had begun about 140 years before Hadar (the last of the eight here named) had been elected to the throne.

But the real cause of the critical difficulty lies in the fact that, if the words were written by Moses, he must be credited with the gift of prophecy. His forecast, that, though there was then no king in Israel, kings would, nevertheless, yet reign in Israel, would be a miracle, and, consequently, no one must be allowed to believe that it ever happened! Hence the attempt to impose upon the unlearned with the assertion that *liḥinē* means "*just before*," &c. This

is the position, radical in its utter unbelief, taken not only by advanced critics, but also by men like Dillmann and Driver. Let me quote the admirable reply given by Dr. Green: "But could Moses," he asks, "have used the expressions in verse 31? Why not? It had been explicitly promised to Abraham (xvii. 6) and to Jacob (xxxv. 11) that kings should arise from their seed. Balaam foretells the exalted dignity of the kingdom in Israel (Numbers xxiv. 7). Moses anticipates that, when the people were settled in Canaan, they would wish to set a king over them like all the nations around them; and, though he did not enjoin the establishment of a kingdom, he gave regulations respecting it (Deuteronomy xvii. 14, &c.) That was the common usage of the nations. It was the prevalent conception of a well-ordered and properly-administered government. Now Jacob inherited the blessing, and Esau did not. It had been foretold that Esau, the elder, should serve Jacob, the younger; that the people descended from the latter should be stronger than the people descended from the former (xxv. 23); that Jacob should be lord over Esau (xxvii. 29). Yet Esau had been a compact, thoroughly organised, kingdom for eight successive reigns, while Israel had just escaped from bondage, and had attained to no such organisation, had not yet had a single king. How could Moses fail to note so remarkable an occurrence? And why was it not perfectly natural for him to have made precisely the statement which we here find?"*

* *The Unity of Genesis*, pp. 428, 429.

The statement, and the very form of the statement, are in absolute harmony with the entire Book; and, as for the miracle of prophetic insight which it displays, the critics may ask us to refuse to credit that, when they have explained the fact that the entire Old Testament has in view, from first to last, the coming of a Saviour for all nations, who shall Himself be a descendant of Abraham—in other words, a Jew.

The second list of Dukes, with which the chapter ends, could not, where everything is watched with jealous eye, escape remark and misconstruction. Any reader, indeed, may ask why we should have this repetition. After the enumeration of Esau's sons by his three wives (verses 10-14), the names are given (15-16) of those who became princes. Then follow the names of the Horites, the confederates of the children of Esau, and of the princes who sprang from them (20-30). These lists are followed by that of the eight kings (31-39). Why, then, after all this is done, should we have, as the conclusion of the genealogy, a second list of the princes? It has been observed, too, that in the second list the eleven names resemble the previous thirteen in only two instances. That is described by Nöldeke as "a flagrant contradiction." But the explanation is very simple, and sheds light also upon the point with which we have just dealt. This last is a *territorial list*, and is carefully described as such by the Scripture: "These are the names of the Dukes that came of Esau . . . AFTER THEIR PLACES" (40); and in

this case the translation ought to run—not “Duke Timnah, Duke Alvah,” &c.; but the Duke of Timnah, the Duke of Alvah, &c. And the evident purpose of the second enumeration is to complete the account of the Edomites by giving the territorial distribution of their princes as they were in the reign of the eighth king, and at the time when the Israelites were passing along their borders. Read in that way, the information given is full, and the order followed is exact.

There are two points upon which modern research has had something to say, and a few words upon these may fitly conclude this chapter. The Scripture here informs us that these two nations, belonging to the ancient East, Edom and Israel, sprang from one home. If this is history and not fable, then, we naturally conclude, that those two brothers, Esau and Jacob, grew up to manhood in the daily and hourly use of the same ancestral language; and that when they parted, this common speech was carried with them, and became the language of their posterity. It might be imagined that the test of language could not be applied here with any decisive result. The land received the name by which it was then, and for some centuries afterwards, known—“the land of Canaan”—from the Canaanites, who spoke a language very closely allied to the Hebrew, and who used an alphabet which speaks quite as eloquently of the near relationship of the two tongues. These facts suggest the conclusion that any argument founded upon the similarities in the speech of the

Idumeans and of the Jews would be delusive. But it is not so. There was, among others, one important respect in which Hebrew differed from the kindred speech of Canaan. This was in the use of the Hebrew definite article *ha*, which was always followed by the doubling of the letter (if a consonant) which began the word to which *ha* was joined.

Now, marvellously enough, one Idumean word has been recovered which permits us to apply this crucial distinction, and so to settle the question of the relationship of those two nations. I may add that the importance of this test is vastly increased by the time to which the word belongs. Had it been late, it might have been said that contact with Israel, after the conquest of the country, had affected the Edomite language. But the word belongs to the period *when the conquest was being made*. It is found in the correspondence discovered at Tel-el-Amarna, in Egypt. Those letters were sent to the Pharaoh by his Palestinian governors and vassal princes at the very time when the tribes of Israel were extending over the country. "In the letter to the Pharaoh," writes Professor Sayce, "in which mention is made of the hostilities carried on by Edom against the Egyptian territory, one of the Edomite towns referred to is called *Khinianabi*. Transcribed into Hebrew characters this would be *En-han-nabi*, 'the Spring of the Prophet.' Here, therefore, the Hebrew article makes its appearance, and that, too, in the very form which it has in the language of Israel.

The fact is an interesting commentary on the brotherhood of Jacob and Esau.”*

Travellers also have had something to say of the land which became the home of Esau and of his descendants. The Scripture tells us that when his elder and beloved son pleaded with tears for “but one blessing” (xxvii. 38), Isaac “said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above” (39). Was that prediction accomplished? When Israel passed onward, under Moses, toward Canaan, the Edomites owned a wide territory. They had occupied the Arabah, the valley which extends from the Dead Sea to the eastern branch of the Red Sea, and also the mountains to the west of that valley. But their original home, to which, too, in after days they seem to have been confined, was the mountainous region to the East of the Arabah. “The character of these mountains,” says Robinson, “is quite different from those on the West of the Arabah. The latter, which seemed to be not more than two-thirds as high, are wholly desolate and sterile; while those on the East appear to enjoy a sufficiency of rain, and are covered with tufts of herbs and occasional trees. The Wadys, too, are full of trees and shrubs and flowers; while the Eastern and higher parts are extensively cultivated, and yield good crops. The general appearance of the soil is not unlike that around Hebron; though the face of the country is very different. It is, indeed, the region of which

* *Patriarchal Palestine*, p. 248.

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Isaac said to his son Esau: 'Behold, thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.'"^{*} The hill-chain of Edom possesses numerous springs which cover the valleys with permanent verdure, and one ancient testimony to its eminence as a fit abode for man is found in its Roman name of *Palæstina Salutaris*.

^{*} *Biblical Researches in Palestine*, vol. ii., p. 154.

SECTION XI.

"THE GENERATIONS OF JACOB."

XXXVII. 2—L. 26.

INTRODUCTORY.

WE enter now upon the last of the great natural Chapters of Genesis. Here also we shall encounter clear evidences of arrangement, as well as fresh displays of that fruitful suggestiveness which is a unique characteristic of the Scriptures. We saw that, in those two large Sections of the Book—"the Generations of Terah," and "the Generations of Isaac"—each was marked by a three-fold division. We note the same arrangement in this third great Section. In the two opening chapters (xxxvii. 2—xxxviii. 39) we have what is plainly a planned contrast. The story of Joseph's life in Palestine is first told without a break; and then the portrait of Judah is set before us with equal fulness. Secondly, nine chapters (xxxix.—xlvii.) are devoted to the continuous history of Joseph in Egypt. It will be observed that in this second part we find the phrases: "It came to pass after these things" (xxxix. 7; xl. 1); "And it came to pass at the end of two full years" (xli. 1). Here it might be imagined that we have fresh breaks in the narrative. But this is not so. These

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mark, not main divisions in the Section, but merely stages in this part of Joseph's history. Last of all, we have a closing division (xlvi. 1.) Jacob is here (as befits the conclusion of "the Generations of Jacob") the centre of the narrative. The closer study of these sub-divisions, to which we now proceed, will make it plain that we are still in the Interpreter's House.

Meanwhile, a word may here be fitly said as to the conspicuous unity of this eleventh and last Chapter of the Book. It need hardly be remarked that the sub-divisions just named do not mar the unity of the Section. On the contrary, they illustrate and prove it, just as the various parts of the human body demonstrate the harmony of the design which has made that organism a complete and unique thing in the physical creation. These three parts form the beginning, the middle, and the conclusion of a history which is "the headstone of the corner" in this Genesis-structure. We see in the first, the best of the Israel family hated, condemned, and exiled. In the second, we note his treatment in Egypt, where at first his evil fortune seems to follow him after a brief basking in the sunshine of favour and prosperity. But that is merely a passing cloud. Joseph is raised to honour, and becomes the saviour of the nations and of Israel also. In the third part, the richest blessings are poured on the head of Joseph, and he "that was separate from his brethren" is installed as the hope and the protector of the new people.

The unity of the Section is, therefore,

parently clear. The three parts are Acts in a great Drama. They unfold the story from its unpromising commencement to its triumphant conclusion with a simplicity, an orderliness, and an unfailing tact which charm us by their superb mastery.

The feeling with which the reader follows the narrative has been shared by the great students of Genesis. "The unity of plan and purpose which pervades the whole," says Dr. Green, "so that every constituent part has its place and its function, and nothing can be severed from it without evident mutilation, positively forbids its being rent asunder in the manner proposed by the critics. If ever a literary production bore upon its face the evidence of its oneness, this is true of the exquisite and touching story of Joseph, which is told with such admirable simplicity and a pathos that is unsurpassed, all the incidents being grouped with the most telling effect, until in the supreme crisis the final disclosure is made. No such high work of art was ever produced by piecing together selected fragments of diverse origin."* So clear is it that the Section is a unity that it has extorted confessions from the critics themselves. Nöldeke has said that "the attempt to dismember this flowing narrative into sources is a veritable failure."†

Kalisch expressed a similar opinion. "The history of Joseph," he wrote, "is carried out with such admirable unity and precision, that all attempts of the fragmentists to dismember it have utterly failed."

* *The Unity of the Book of Genesis*, p. 430. † *Untersuchungen*, p. 32.

“Vater, to whom the Pentateuch,” writes Dr. Green, “was a collection of heterogeneous fragments, and who was ready to go to any length in the work of disintegration, nevertheless says* that the history of Joseph is ‘a connected whole, to rend it asunder would be to do violence to the narrative.’ And Tuch, who finds a double narrative throughout the rest of Genesis, declares that it is impossible to do so here. ‘Several wrong courses have been ventured upon,’ he says,† ‘in respect to the narrator of the life of Joseph. Some, relying upon insecure or misunderstood criteria, have sought to extort two divergent accounts. Others have held that the documents have been so worked over that it is impracticable to separate them with any degree of certainty. But we must insist upon the close connection of the whole recital, in which one thing carries another along with it, and recognise in that which is continuously written the work of one author.’ And he adds, respecting chapter xxxvii.: ‘This section in particular has been remarkably maltreated by the divisive document and redactor hypotheses of Ilgen and Gramberg without bringing forth anything but an arbitrary piece of mosaic work, which is shattered by the inner consistency and connection of the passage itself.’”

One would have imagined that, in the face of such protests, the critics would have seriously re-considered their analysis. But they had gone too far to

* *Commentar über den Pentateuch*, I., p. 290; III., p. 435.

† *Commentar über die Genesis* (2nd Edition), p. 417.

be able to retreat. If they were to acknowledge that the breaking-up of the Joseph-history was impossible, they would be compelled to confess that their entire system is a mistake. Wellhausen has frankly owned that it is the stern necessity for consistency which forces them to rend this seamless garment in pieces. "It is to be presumed," he says, "that this work is here as elsewhere compounded of J and E. Our previous results urge to this conclusion, and would be seriously shaken if this were not demonstrable. I hold, therefore, that the attempt 'to dismember the flowing narrative of Joseph into sources' is not a failure, but is as necessary as the decomposition of Genesis in general." Consequently common sense must yield to the necessities of the critical position, and must not be permitted to interfere even in so plain a case as this. Gunkel accordingly breaks up this "flowing" and unique narrative into thirty-seven fragments! But this is nothing to the achievement of his English *confrère*. Dr. Driver presents us with sixty-one morsels! This, be it remembered, is done from no necessity enforced by the narrative itself. It is due solely to the necessity for consistency. "Our previous results," says Wellhausen, "urge to this conclusion." But there is another side to this matter. If previous results urge to a conclusion that is so manifestly untrue and absurd, what is the worth of those previous results? The palpable and confessed unity of this Section of Genesis is one more reminder of the impending collapse of that pretentious system.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO ISRAELS: JOSEPH AND JUDAH.

xxxvii. 2—xxxviii. 30.

THOUGH the critics are unable to look upon these two chapters as a whole, commentators have long felt that they are not merely parts of one narrative, but that they are also intended to set before us two companion pictures.

We have, to begin with, the opening incidents (compressed into this thirty-seventh of Genesis) of the history of Joseph. We see him first in his home, the well-beloved of his father; then surrounded by the hatred of his brethren; last of all, we are witnesses of his seizure, his being carried down to Egypt, and his being sold as a slave to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers. There, for the time, the history stops. Now, before we look farther into this narrative, or consider why the story should be broken off just at this point, a question which we have hinted at before recurs again. Why should this last Section of Genesis commence in this fashion? Why should "the Generations of *Jacob*" open at once with the history of *Joseph*? Has this happened by chance? Is it due merely to the writer's caprice? Or shall we say that the Book is so arranged because the writer's "documents" were fuller of that matter than of any other; or is it because of a distinct—let me add a Divine—plan that the Section opens thus

and continues to be Joseph's history almost to its close?

One reply might be that Jacob's history, and the history of his descendants, demanded an early and full notice of the career of Joseph. Jacob has a second great and lasting sorrow. What has caused it? The story of the enmity of Joseph's brethren, of their plot for their brother's destruction, and of his removal to Egypt was a quite needful explanation. Then Jacob himself removes from Palestine, the land of promise, and along with his entire family settles in Egypt. What has led to that radical and unexpected change? This again would have called for the account of Joseph's advancement and his vast preparations to meet the necessities of the seven years of famine. It might still be objected, however, that this does not fully explain the binding up of Joseph's history from the very outset with "The Generations of Jacob," and the treating of the accounts of his brethren, and even the history of his father himself, as merely subsidiary parts of Joseph's own history. But when it is seen that Joseph is the type and prophecy of Jesus, all is clear. How could the tale of "The Generations of Jacob"—the outcome, that is to say, of Jacob's existence—be otherwise than full of the story of the Beloved of the Father? The Book of Genesis begins with the promise of the Christ. The whole purpose of the Book is to show the progress of the preparation for His coming. How, then, could the Book end save in some prophetic manifestation of

Him, and of what His coming was to mean for Israel and for the world?

The critics see no deep and close connection of this kind binding together what is to them a number of fragments that can have at best a merely superficial relationship. To that notion of the Book they are rigidly bound down by their hypothesis of its origin. It does not surprise us, therefore, to note the following in Dillmann: "The connection made," he says, "with the history of Joseph is quite external."* Dr. Driver's view is similar: "The section," he writes, "is headed *Tōledōth Jacob*; but this is simply a consequence of the plan followed by the compiler: Isaac is dead; and Jacob is therefore technically the leading figure."† Our study of the Section will in itself be quite sufficient to prove how little the higher criticism understands the document with which it deals. In this last selection of the chosen seed, we have no longer to do with one individual only, but with a family. Instead of one man we have twelve. But is each of those twelve men the kind of man that God desires to see, and for whom the world is waiting? Is there, on the other hand, any one of them who by character, and possibly by history, is able to set forth the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth, in Whom all nations are to be blessed, and for Whom, therefore, all humanity is waiting? If Genesis is really God's Book, these are questions which may certainly find an answer in this its closing Section and its climax. . And if we dis-

* *Genesis*, vol. II., p. 542.

† *Genesis*, p. 319.

cover, as I believe we shall discover, that those questions *are* answered, and that "the Generations of Jacob" have become the history of Joseph because they are answered, I think we shall close the Book with the conviction that it is in very truth Divine.

In Chapter xxxvii. a continuous account is given of Joseph's history from the time he becomes more closely associated with his brethren. He is still a lad of seventeen when he is sold as a slave in Egypt. It could only have been for a few years, therefore, that he had been allowed to join the pasturing expeditions, and had been committed to his brethren's care. Among his first experiences was his association with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, when he took some minor part under their direction in the shepherding of the flocks. When he returned to the home he came with a heavy heart. The conduct of his brethren had been a painful surprise to the pure and tender-hearted boy. There is no one to whom he can unbosom himself save Jacob. "And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report" (verse 2).

This is the first glimpse given to us of that ancient home-life. The next shows us the father's affection for "the son of his old age." The love is shown in the gift of "the coat of many colours"—just such a garment as is depicted upon the Egyptian monuments as worn by Syrian magnates of the period. This sign of the father's love awakes the jealous hatred of his brethren, boy though Joseph still is. The curtain is now lifted a third time, and we mark Joseph encircled by his brethren, who *are* listening intently, but with

darkening brows, to the youthful speaker. He is telling a dream, which is evidently a prophecy of coming greatness. He had seen himself and them in the harvest field, binding sheaves. His sheaf stood up and their sheaves rose around it, and bowed down, making obeisance to it. "And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words" (verse 8). But the prophecy of coming greatness was repeated with more emphatic accompaniments and larger promise than before. This second dream he told in another gathering, of which his father also formed part. It was an age and a clime in which dreams were regarded as disclosures from on high; and this repeated vision, in which he saw the sun and moon and the eleven stars making obeisance to him, seems to have impressed his brethren in spite of themselves. Jacob felt it needful, for the lad's own sake, and for the peace of the home, to rebuke him. There seems to have been in this instance no open reviling from his brethren; but they "envied him" (verse 11).

Now come the closing scenes of this Section of Joseph's history. Jacob's elder sons have taken the flocks to the far off northern pastures, and he sends Joseph to Shechem to bring him tidings of them. So intent is the youth upon the execution of this commission that, when he is unable to find his brethren in the expected district, he wanders on in the hope of coming upon some trace of them. He is told

that they have gone still farther north, to Dothan. He follows them thither. The keen-eyed shepherds recognise him in the distance, and immediately it flashes upon them that now has come their great opportunity. The hatred of their souls is delivered into their hands. They are alone. There is none to resist them, and none to report their crime. "Come now therefore," said they, "and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit; and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams" (verse 20).

Reuben is alarmed; but, knowing the men with whom he has to deal, he proposes what seems to be a mere modification of the crime. "And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into the pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again" (verse 22). His suggestion to put him into one of the many wells of Dothan, and there leave him to die of starvation, is acted upon. But as they are satisfying their own hunger, an incident occurs which entirely alters their intentions. A caravan approaches going towards Egypt. The eagerness of the merchants to obtain Syrian slaves for the Egyptian market is well-known to Joseph's brethren, and the suggestion of Judah that they sell their brother instead of slaying him is acted upon forthwith. That there was an affecting scene, with regard to which the Scripture is here silent, we know from the words wrung from them long afterwards, when "they said one to another,

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We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear" (xlii. 21). Joseph is carried down into Egypt, and Jacob mourns over his supposed death with a sorrow which refuses to be comforted.

That is one picture: let us now turn to the other. Chapter xxxviii. sets Judah before us just as xxxvii. was devoted to Joseph. But here we search in vain for any redeeming trait. Judah breaks entirely with the patriarchal policy of separation from the people of the land. He takes up his abode with Canaanites (verse 1); marries into a Canaanitish family; and selects a Canaanite as a wife for his eldest son (2-6). The moral contamination which resulted from these alliances is shown in the depravity of his children, who fall under the judgment of God (7-10). The defilement envelopes Judah himself and weaves the record of his shame into the history of his posterity (12-30). Everything in this narrative saddens and repels, and we do not dwell upon its details. But that very fact emphasises the contrast. Here are two Israels set side by side. That nothing is said to attract attention to these companion pictures, and that no hint is dropped that these two narratives are intended to be received as companion pictures, must not be regarded as any proof that they are not so intended. The Scripture abounds in silences of this very kind. The construction of the contrast carries with it the needed suggestion, and the Bible-student is left to ponder and to discover.

Here, then, are two Israels in this Jacob-family; one well pleasing to God, to which are given prophetic indications of a glorious destiny: the other turning aside to the things, and cultivating fellowship with the men, over whom the thunderclouds of Divine vengeance are deepening daily. In a Book meant for Israel's admonition it was fitting that the contrast should be inserted at the very beginning of the chosen nation's history. It was fitting, too, that a well of consolation should be also opened for God's elect, and that they should know that no strange thing happened to them when they, too, were hated and spoiled and cast out by their brethren.

But, when we ask why *Judah* is selected, we are carried farther. It is entirely probable that there were similar stories to be told of each of the rest of those men who brought this crowning sorrow upon their aged father. Why, then, is Judah rather than any other selected for this contrast with Joseph? Was there anything in the after history of his descendants which made him the representative of the Israelitish people? We, who believe that these two chapters were arranged and placed where they now are by Him whose eye rested upon the whole of Israel's then future, have a clear reply. Judah, after the fall of the northern kingdom and the captivity of the ten tribes, was identified with the Israelitish people. Israel was known everywhere, and is spoken of in Scripture, as "the people of the Jews." When we recall, therefore, that Joseph is the type among these twelve men of Jesus, we see in this

contrast merely an extension of the prophetic type in the fact that Judah should here be cited as the representative of those who were to reject the Christ. It adds to our conviction that this is God's Book and not man's, when we note also that it is Judah who suggests, and no doubt carries out, the sale and the casting out of God's chosen Saviour from the midst of Israel. That was to be the crime of the Jew. To others, who do not so regard the Book, these things will be ranked as strange coincidences. In other words, they will increase perplexity and not deepen faith—a result that is of profound significance for multitudes in these days of gainsaying.

CHAPTER II.

OBJECTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES.

THE critical partition of Genesis rests mainly upon supposed "double accounts" and repetitions. These have been cited as a triumphant reply to every objection, and a sufficient answer to allay every doubt as to the validity of critical methods. It was in vain to reply that things exactly similar are to be found in documents, the unity of whose authorship is unquestionable. The rejoinder was quietly ignored. But in the history of Joseph the critics are compelled to meet the very case to which their opponents have all along been endeavouring to call their attention. This history is a confessed unity; and yet so-called

double accounts and repetitions are found here too. As Wellhausen confesses, they must either break up this narrative also into fragments, or confess that the entire critical fabric is "seriously shaken."

We, therefore, look for a moment or two at the critical argument. Speaking of Chapter xxxvii., Gunkel says: "This Chapter is full of doublets and repetitions: according to verses 25, 27, 28, xxxix. 1, they are the Ishmaelites who bring Joseph down into Egypt; according to verses 28 and 36 they are, on the contrary, Midianites. The Ishmaelites bought Joseph (27, 28); the Midianites, on the contrary, stole him (28). The brethren are envious of Joseph (1) because his father prefers him and makes him a present of a sleeved garment (3, 4); (2) because he has dreams which seem to predict a future lordship over his brethren (5-11). (Verse 2 gives a third motive for the envy: Joseph has related evil things about his brethren . . .). To the sleeved garment reference is made again (23, 31, 32, 33); to his prophetic dreams (19, 20). The father is named Israel (3, 13), or Jacob (34). The elder brother who intervenes on behalf of Joseph is called Reuben (21, 22, 29), or Judah (26). Twice does Jacob give Joseph the order to go to his brethren (12, 13a, 14b; 13b, 14a). Twice do the brothers determine to slay Joseph (18b; 19, 20). Twice does one brother oppose them (21 [where Reuben is substituted for Judah]; 22),"* etc.

Here the various suggestions of inconsistencies

* *Genesis*, pp. 353, 354.

have been most carefully gathered together and arranged in a picture which is plainly intended to be of an impressive character. But its only impressive feature is the desperate attempt to evolve something out of nothing. Beyond the interchange of the terms Ishmaelite and Midianite, the critics have nothing whatever to rest upon. But that we may not miss, and so seem to evade, this imposing array of proofs for the critical case, let us tabulate and duly number the points.

1. Those who bring Joseph down to Egypt are Ishmaelites (37, 25, 27, 28, 39).
Those who bring Joseph down to Egypt are Midianites (37, 28, 36).
2. The Ishmaelites *bought* Joseph (37, 27, 28).
The Midianites *stole* Joseph (28).
3. His brethren envy Joseph because—
 - (1) His father prefers him, and makes him a present of a sleeved coat.
 - (2) Of his dreams.
 - (3) He reports evil of them.
4. The sleeved coat is referred to again (37, 23, 31, 32, 33).
The prophetic dreams are referred to again (19, 26).
5. The father is named Israel (37, 3, 13), or Jacob (34).
6. The elder brother who intervenes is Reuben (21, 22, 29).
The elder brother who intervenes is Judah (26).
7. Jacob orders Joseph to go to his brethren twice (12, 13a, 14b; and 13b, 14a).
8. Twice does one brother oppose the rest (21; in 22 Reuben is substituted for Judah).

8. Let us begin with this last—the repeated opposition of one elder brother to the rest (21—22, 26—27). The question is sometimes asked what we owe to the higher criticism. The information that a repetition exists in these verses may be set down as part of the answer ; for, apart from the microscopical “discoveries” of this “sacred science,” it may be safely concluded that no rational being would ever have suspected the existence of a repetition in the following statements :

“And Reuben heard it [that is, the communing of the conspirators], and he delivered him out of their hands ; and said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit in the wilderness, and lay no hands upon him ; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again” (21, 22).

“And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it, if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood ? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hands be upon him ; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content” (26, 27).

With the above passages before his eye, the reader will note how painfully inexact the critical statement is. Gunkel sets this down as a case of *repeated* opposition of one brother to the rest. There is opposition certainly on the part of Reuben. For the majority had resolved to slay Joseph as soon as he should come among them. Reuben at once inter-

vened, combated the resolution at which they had arrived, and persuaded them to accomplish the end which they aimed at in another way. The plan of immediate slaughter was exchanged for the infliction of a slower death by starvation. There was, therefore, distinct opposition there. But Judah, on the other hand, merely makes a fresh suggestion, which is at once and harmoniously adopted. Can this be fairly set down as repeated "opposition"? And why should not both incidents have occurred in the same transaction? Why should they not be simply successive steps in one continuous history? Reuben prevents a scene of bloody vengeance, and gets the sentence changed into one of death by starvation. Judah then, on an unexpected opportunity presenting itself, secures a further modification, by the adoption of which their vengeance may be satisfied, while they are freed from the actual commission of murder. The sentence is once more changed, but now from death by starvation to slavery and exile.

The critical argument, that Judah's question—"What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?"—indicates complete ignorance of any modification in the original intention of Joseph's brethren, is really beneath notice. Was it not still their fixed intention to deprive their brother of his life—in other words, "to slay" him? And why should we be asked to blind ourselves and refuse to see that Judah is plainly now proposing selling instead of slaying—a thing that Reuben did not

propose, and indeed, never thought of? A close examination of the text also reveals the evidence of complete harmony in the narrative. Reuben speaks of "killing," that is, of slaughtering (*nakeimu*), and of "shedding blood." The suggestion of these expressions is unmistakable. Reuben dreads an immediate and bloody assault upon the lad who is eagerly hasting towards them, in utter ignorance of their terrible design. But a moment or two more and a corpse, marred by ghastly wounds, will lie bathed in blood upon the sod. The suggestion conveyed by Judah's words is entirely different, and is in complete accord with the rest of the narrative. He uses a different expression for slaying (*harōg*), and speaks not of *shedding*—but of "*concealing*" Joseph's blood. This plainly means that they have adopted some plan by which they hope to effect this murder *in secret*. What does Judah refer to? Has he not plainly in view their intention to leave their brother to perish in that covered cistern?

7. "Twice does Jacob give the direction to go to his brethren." So Gunkel says; but let us examine the Scripture for ourselves. It reads thus:—

"And Israel said to Joseph, Are not thy brethren shepherding in Shechem? Come and I shall send thee to them; and he said to him, Behold me. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, and see the welfare of thy brethren and the welfare of the flock and bring me word. And he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he went toward Shechem" (13—14).

Here even the most perverse ingenuity could not, one would think, point out even a shadow of repetition or twist the words into two diverse accounts of the same transaction. First of all, we have Israel's summons to Joseph, and an indication of the service which he desires the lad to perform. It is merely a promise to send Joseph upon this errand, if he is prepared to undertake it. The lad's youth, and his not unnatural timidity, might well render it questionable whether he could undertake so distant an expedition alone. But, however that may be, one thing is certain. There is here *no command to go*. Joseph appropriately replies, "Behold me," indicating that he is in complete readiness to do whatever his father desires. He then awaits his father's instructions. What follows is the necessary consequence to this that has preceded. The latter was the prelude to, and not a forestalling of, the commission which is now fully explained and formally given. Everything is in the most natural and the closest sequence; and if this can be tortured into two accounts and a repetition, there is no narrative in existence which is safe from a like perversion.

6. Next we have the alleged repetition as to the intervention of the elder brother. According to one account, he was called "Reuben"; according to the other, he bore the name "Judah." We have already dealt with this in 8, where Gunkel presents substantially the same objection. Here, however, it is the fact of an *elder* brother intervening, and it is suggested that the notion that two out of ten men should be

moved by a desire to escape the guilt of murder is not for one moment to be entertained by anyone worthy of the name of scholar. One can only reply that if any member of a detective force should develop so abnormal a faculty of suspicion, there would be but one opinion as to the necessity for his temporary seclusion under medical supervision. Reuben's act is thoroughly in keeping with his responsibility as head of the family. He desires both to preserve Joseph's life, and to save his father from a life-long sorrow. Judah has thought of neither. That Joseph may perish in the wilderness, or under the hand of a taskmaster, is no concern to him. He is intent only upon his removal from the home, and upon this being achieved without involving them in the guilt of actual murder.

It may be added, too, that the narrative, in spite of all that the critics have done, continues to be consistent. In chapter xlii. 22, we are told that Joseph took Simeon, the second eldest of his brethren, and "bound him before their eyes." Why was not Reuben, the eldest, taken? When we remember that Reuben had saved Joseph's life, we have a full explanation. Then, at the same interview with Joseph, his brethren, bewailing with each other in Hebrew, of which language they imagine the Egyptian Governor to be ignorant, give a two-fold expression to their thoughts. "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear" (xlii. 21). That was the

confession of all, including Judah, and excluding Reuben. They have before their eyes the handing over of the lad to life-long slavery, and his pathetic entreaties to be allowed to return to his father. Reuben, on the other hand, makes no confession. He condemns their deed, and holds them answerable for the penalty that is now being exacted. "Spake I not unto you," he asks, "saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore, behold, also his blood is required" (22). In other words, if they had listened to him, Joseph would have been restored to his home, and not sent forth to die among strangers. Now what can the words mean, if it was not true that two elder brothers *had* intervened; and that, while Reuben had sought to restore Joseph to his father, Judah had, indeed, saved his life for the moment, but sold him away into rigorous, hopeless bondage? The so-called "doublets" and "repetitions" are but parts of one continuous and harmonious history.

5. We now look at the two names "Jacob" and "Israel" applied to the father. In xxxvii. 3, we are told that "Israel loved Joseph more than all his children . . . and he made him a coat of many colours," and in verse 13: "And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren shepherd in Shechem? come, and I shall send thee," etc. Verse 34 runs: "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days." "Israel" was Jacob's name of triumph. It was quite appropriate that it should be used when he

bestowed upon Joseph a princely mark of his favour, and when he sent him upon that last mission. But it was equally appropriate that it should *not* be used as his designation when overwhelmed with that great sorrow. This discrimination in the use of these names shows oneness of authorship; and that criticism should be blind to this fact augurs badly for the stability of that so-called "science."

3 and 4. Joseph's brethren are said to be credited with three, or at least two, distinct and different motives for their deadly hatred of him. The first is his father's preference for him and the gift of the coat of many colours (it is kind of the critics not to separate these, and so to spare us a fourth motive). The second is his dreams, indicating his future supremacy over his brethren; and the third is his reporting evil of them to his father. The coat is mentioned again—and it could hardly fail to be in a continuous narrative. Joseph is stripped of it before he is consigned to the pit (23), and it is dipped in goat's blood and sent to their father (31). And so, also, we find a second reference to the dreams. "We shall see," said they, "what will become of his dreams" (20).

That is the indictment; and when it is stated, we ask in amazement, What, then? Has it never occurred to the critical imagination that men may have more than one motive for a deed of superlative wickedness? Is it utterly inconceivable to the critical brain that men may act under what they conceive to be an accumulation of wrongs? Must we further inquire

whether this new rule of one act one motive—one vengeance one wrong—is to be forthwith applied to all past history, and whether our historical classics are to be broken up accordingly and parted among a host of unknown authors?

2. The Ishmaelites bought Joseph (27, 28): the Midianites stole him (28). These references will perplex the reader. For this critical achievement consists in turning one part of a verse against the rest. The passage runs thus in Hebrew and in English:—(27) "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for our brother, our flesh, is he. And his (Judah's) brethren hearkened. (28) And there passed by Midianites, merchantmen. And they drew and raised up Joseph from the pit. And they sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they drove Joseph towards Egypt."

The reader will still ask, where lies the justification for the statement that the Midianites stole Joseph? Driver has not yet advanced as far as to do violence to the text, and his translation is at one in that matter with this now given, and with the Authorised Version. But Gunkel has no such scruples, and translates thus: "Now Midianitish men, merchants, passed; these drew Joseph up from the cistern," etc. In spite of the words and the context, this perversion is urged upon the reader as the one and only sense of the passage. Judah, seeing the caravan approach, proposes to his brethren that they sell Joseph. But they are saved that trouble.

The Midianites, who seem to have so keen a scent for a possible slave that they can detect Joseph in the dark depths of the well, draw him up and dispose of their prey to a part of their company, who are Ishmaelites. It is in vain that we ask how the Midianites knew anything whatever of Joseph; why Joseph's brethren are utterly passive and silent; why the Midianites, if they were bent upon stealing, did not take the nine men who were above ground, but concerned themselves entirely with one of whose location they could have known nothing; why the Midianites should have sold their captive to the Ishmaelites, seeing that both parties were going down to Egypt together, where the Syrian slave was certain to sell well and readily; and, lastly, how it happened that, if the Midianites had sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites, they themselves nevertheless sell him to Potiphar (verse 36)? It is in vain that we ask these questions, and it is in vain that we expostulate against turning the admirable sense of the Scripture into this critical nonsense. The expert has spoken: and ours is not to reason why, but to hear submissively.

1. The Ishmaelites bring Joseph down to Egypt, according to xxxvii. 25, 27, 31, and xxxix. 1; the Midianites bring him, according to xxxvii. 28, 36. This is the one and only seemingly solid bit of ground for the critical objections. There is a mixing up of Midianites and Ishmaelites in these transactions which has always perplexed the reader of Scripture. Thus Judah proposes to sell Joseph to the Ishmael-

ites (verse 27), and he is sold to the Ishmaelites (28). But the caravan is described first as consisting of Ishmaelites (25), and then as composed of Midianites (28). Joseph is sold in Egypt by the Midianites (36), and by the Ishmaelites (xxxix. 1). The critics, with Alexander-like promptitude, cut the Gordian knot, and break up the Scripture into portions belonging to two different and conflicting documents. The believing student asks whether these two peoples were so mixed up that the names could be exchanged in this embarrassing way. He asks, indeed, whether the names are so interchanged to point out that the Ishmaelites and the Midianites were practically one people. With this question, he turns inquiringly to the other Scriptures; and he is rewarded. In Judges vii. and viii. the great host which Gideon overthrew is spoken of throughout as consisting of Midianites, assisted by Amalekites. There is no mention of Ishmaelites till we come to the partition of the spoil. But there we meet the surprising statement that the men who had perished were Ishmaelites! The victorious Israelites desire to confer upon Gideon the royal dignity. He declines the honour, but adds: "I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For," adds the Scripture, "they had golden earrings, *because they were Ishmaelites*)" (viii. 24).

Here, then, we are again confronted by the fact which has so disturbed us in Genesis. And here, also, our difficulty is cleared away. The interchange of the names in Genesis suggested that in some way

the peoples were identified with each other ; and now we are assured that this is the explanation. Those dead Midianites, who had fallen beneath the swords of the men of Israel, "were Ishmaelites." How it came about that, while the people were intermingled, the two distinct names were continued, we cannot yet explain. It is enough, meantime, to be assured of the fact, and to know that the partition of Genesis into which the critics rushed was made in ignorance of the Scriptures. And now, with this explanation, vanishes the one solitary semblance of fact which this erroneous system was here able to claim as a foundation.

CHAPTER III.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT (XXXIX.—XLVII.)

THE CONTENTS.

WE now come to the Second Chapter of "The Generations of Jacob." The first, the study of which we have just concluded, has shown us the beloved of his father hated and exiled by his brethren. That chapter ended with a silent but eloquent contrast, which revealed the supreme worthiness of Joseph. The history from this point becomes the story of Joseph. Jacob and his other sons are for the time left behind us, and we pass down to Egypt with the exile and slave. We follow there his changing

fortunes with absorbing interest, grieving in his grief, and rejoicing in his triumph.

After having recounted the pitiful story of Judah, the Scripture thus takes up again the thread of Joseph's history. We are told once more that he was brought to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, a great Egyptian official. The Hebrew lad had no doubt the meanest duties assigned to him, when first introduced to what was evidently a large and fashionable Egyptian household. But He who heals the broken in heart will comfort Joseph in the house of bondage. So surprising a manifestation of the Divine blessing is given to him that he is rejoiced and awed by an overpowering conviction that God is with him in very truth. Everything consigned to his care prospers. What it is that, in any case, requires to be done becomes at once clear to his eye. An eager desire to serve is seconded by a Divinely-given ability. The result is marked and marvellous. All notice it. Gifts like his cannot be overlooked, and his advance is rapid, and apparently ungrudged. Gradually, but with a necessity that will not be denied, he rises to the highest post in the whole household, and there he is trusted with a confidence which is boundless. That resourceful capacity, that unwearying industry and spotless integrity, make Potiphar feel that even the matters that are of chiefest concern to him are safer in Joseph's care than they would be in his own. "And he left all he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat" (xxxix. 6).

But God had some better thing for Joseph than the gilded slavery of Potiphar's household. And so this last has to end, and the preparations for the grander destiny have to begin. But how strange, and even terrible, does God's way appear! A temptation, which God could have cleared away from Joseph's path, is permitted to remain; for the servant of God must choose the better part with full and unalterable resolution, and must fight and suffer for it. There is love that brings no blessing with it, and such was the affection of Joseph's mistress. It sets before him the alternative of temporal suffering or of eternal death. He has to brave either a woman's hate or the judgment of God. The record of this temptation has preserved for us one priceless gem. It is that reply of Joseph which has made him the leader of those who are struggling with the world, the devil, and the flesh. These words sweep like a resistless sword through all Satanic illusion: "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

The temporal suffering came with certainty and sharpness. The falsehood told by Joseph's mistress was all the more triumphant that Joseph's lips were no doubt sealed. How could he declare the infamy of his mistress, and so overwhelm with shame and grief the master whom he had hitherto sought to relieve from the slightest burden of care? But this very absence of any attempt to avenge himself shut him in with God, and permitted patience to have her perfect work. Had the sunshine of prosperity continued unclouded, even Joseph might have become

self-sufficient and vain. His constant dependence upon God might have lessened, and his realization of the Divine presence might have disappeared. So once more all seems lost. He is cast into the seething waters that he may seek to the Rock that is higher than he.

A further disappointment, which was also bitter enough, shuts him in still more fully to trust in God. It was entirely natural that Joseph should expect that Pharaoh's cup-bearer would remember his service. But two years pass without the slightest token of this official's gratitude, and then God's marvellous work begins. The deliverance comes with a suddenness and a completeness which are for Joseph the mightiest consecration. In a single day the prison doors are opened, and the convicted slave is made the possessor of the highest authority in Egypt. "Only in the throne," said Pharaoh, "shall I be greater than thou"; that is, only on state occasions should Pharaoh take precedence over this heaven-sent Dictator, in whose hands the country and its destinies were now solemnly placed (xli. 39-45).

Joseph, thus so fully trusted, responds with a heaven-taught loyalty. He will live for this land; and so he accepts the wife given him by Pharaoh, and makes Egypt his home. But his first and chief concern is to prepare for the great crisis through which Egypt and the world are to pass. The overflowing provision of the seven years of plenty must be stored where it may be at hand in those coming days of ever-deepening famine. "And Joseph was

thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt . . . And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was about every city, laid he up in the same" (verses 46-49).

The Scripture completes this notice of the seven years' activity with a word regarding Joseph's sons. "And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction" (verses 50-52).

The reason assigned by Joseph for the name which he gives to his first-born startles, and it may be shocks, the reader. His brethren might well forget Joseph; and if we were told that all memory of him had perished from their thoughts, we should conclude that this was in perfect accord with their apparently selfish and unamiable characters. But that Joseph could ever have ceased to dwell with tenderness over the recollection of his early home we are by no means prepared to admit; and it certainly seems to be utterly at variance with all we know of his disposition that he could rejoice in forgetting his father's house.

We have only, however, to look more closely at the Scripture statement to discover that the shock we may have experienced was entirely due to our own misconceptions. For, when we weigh his words, we perceive that the feelings of Joseph were the reverse of what we conceived them to be. His thankfulness is due to the fact that he *has* been remembering the home of his infancy and boyhood. His heart has been breaking with longing for it. All that is plainly declared in this thanksgiving. But God has given him a home in Egypt, and now, with this young life resting in his arms, his soul—sore wounded, and desolate—finds heaven-sent rest, refreshment, inspiration, and a place for service such as the appeal of a dependent life alone can give. His wound is healed; and he thanks God that the memory of the loss of the old home-life is swallowed up in the joy of this new home-life. Let it be noticed, too, that he speaks, not of his father, but of his “father’s house.”

But perhaps it is only when we note the prophetic aspect of this part of the history that everything becomes perfectly clear. Joseph, as we have already seen, is the type of Jesus. The birth of the Gentile Church will, in that case, find its representation in the birth of Manasseh. In the joy of this, the exiled Messiah has been made to forget His suffering and His rejection. But the reward of Jesus, like that of Joseph, will be complete. There will be a second birth. There will be, in process of time, a Jewish Church, and the truth of the prophecy of the name Ephraim (“double fruit”) will then appear. Like

Paul (the type of his people) who was like one born out of due time, but who laboured more abundantly than all the apostles who had preceded him, this latter-day Church will exceed in service and in spiritual glory.

In saving Egypt, Joseph was also to attain the predicted greatness among his brethren; and the narrative now sets before us the tenderest pages in all ancient history. The famine was sore in Canaan also; and the princely house of Jacob, that has to minister to the necessities of so many, has to look abroad for assistance.

“And Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt. And Jacob said to his sons, Why look ye one upon another? And he said, Behold I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: go down thither and get corn for us from thence, and we shall live and not die” (xlii. 1, 2).

All Joseph's brethren, with the exception of Benjamin, depart upon this expedition. We learn from verse 5 that they were not alone upon the journey; “for the famine was in the land of Canaan,” and they “came to buy corn among those that came.” Their approach must have recalled his early dreams to Joseph's mind with startling vividness, as, when their opportunity came for the desired interview with the lord of the land, “Joseph's brethren . . . bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.”

His recognition of them was immediate, while there was nothing farther from their thoughts than to

imagine there could be any connection between the long departed Joseph and this great personage upon whom they and theirs were dependent for their daily bread. And now began a scene which has not been without its difficulties for the sympathisers with Joseph. He “made himself strange unto them and spake roughly unto them.” The danger of invasion, specially from the East, was one to which Egypt was always exposed. The plenty now within the land, and the pressure of the dearth outside its borders, lent an added note of terror to the appalling words thrown at them by the Governor as he looked upon them with stern face and clouded brow: “Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.” It was in vain that they explained the purity of their intentions. “He said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land are ye come.” They knew what that final judgment meant. It was their death sentence. They then enter into a still fuller explanation of their position. They are one man’s sons, and comprise his whole family, with the exception of the two youngest, the elder of whom is dead, and the younger is with his father in Canaan. The Governor immediately demands confirmation of this statement. They must send one of their number and fetch their young brother, while the rest of them remain in prison. Thither they are all meanwhile conducted until their consent is given and their messenger appointed. On the third day he brings them forth, and makes a fresh proposal to them.

"And Joseph said to them the third day, This do ye and live: I fear God. If ye are upright, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison; and go ye carry corn for the famine of your houses; and your youngest brother bring ye unto me, and your words shall be established and ye shall not die" (18-20).

To this proposal they give immediate assent; but this unexpected measure of leniency completes what those three days of dread have begun. They have recalled their sin, and now openly in the Governor's presence, but in a tongue to which they believe he is a stranger, they confess and bewail their guilt. Joseph, who has had to force himself to act this stern part, can no longer control his feelings. He withdraws that he may give way to the emotion which masters him, and then returns and superintends the enforcement of the new decree. Joseph's real feelings are shown in the directions which he gives as to filling their sacks with corn, and putting back the purchase money into each sack before it is closed. His purpose in this is plain. Jacob was indeed rich; but his wealth consists largely in flocks and herds, the value of which in famine time swiftly decreases, if it does not entirely disappear. Joseph, therefore, while sending an abundant supply of corn, returns the money for which there may yet be need enough to procure bread for Jacob's large following. But if he felt thus, why, it will be asked, did he assume that stern demeanour, and accuse, and

threaten? The results attained, and which Joseph in the wisdom given to him knew would thus be attained, furnish a full reply. He procured all the information which he desired regarding his father and Benjamin, and for which he could not have asked without betraying himself. Behind the hard dealing there stood the love that must be satisfied.

The demand for Benjamin's presence in Egypt fell upon Jacob's heart as a presage of fresh calamity. The straitness of famine was borne with until endurance was no longer possible. A second journey had to be undertaken, and Benjamin is committed to Judah's care (xlili. 1-14). And now comes the supreme trial of Joseph's brethren. He rejoiced to see his brother, and to be thus assured that he is alive and well. But why had Benjamin not come with the rest in the first instance? Joseph himself had been readily sent on that far errand to Shechem when still a lad; and Benjamin's presence with his brethren would have contributed effectually to the much-required supply for their households at home. Why had he, then, according to their own confession, been prevented by Jacob from joining the expedition? The suspicion thus engendered led to a new plan by which the disposition of those men towards his brother would be fully disclosed. Benjamin is apparently caught in the act of theft, and is condemned to slavery. Before the sincere affection for their father displayed by those changed men, and before the undeniable tenderness of their solicitude for this the son of Jacob's old age, Joseph's sus-

pitions vanish. He makes himself known to them; quiets their apprehensions; stills the accusings of their now fully-aroused consciences; and, in a scene which the Scripture has impressed upon the imagination of every reader with a vividness which no art can imitate, Joseph and his brethren are reconciled and are united in a love till then unknown between them. Arrangements are made, with the consent of Pharaoh, and with the full approval of the sovereign and the Court of Egypt, for the immediate removal of Jacob, his sons, and their households from Canaan to Egypt. The much-afflicted patriarch is clasped in the arms of his long-lost son, and he traces with adoring wonder the good hand of God even in those dark days of sorrow.

The Section ends (xlvi. 13—31) with an indication of Joseph's policy in dealing with the famine crisis in Egypt (13—26), and with an account of the solemn engagement given to his father to carry his body for burial from Egypt to the cave of Machpelah in the land of promise. There is a seeming harshness in the terms which Joseph makes with the Egyptians. After having received their money, he took over their land, purchasing it for Pharaoh. "And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh . . . And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof" (20, 21). That there was no tyrannical harshness in this was always clear from the reply of the grateful people: "Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will

be Pharaoh's servants" (25). But the full justification of this far-seeing policy was reserved to these last days, the remarkable discoveries of which have shed so unexpected a light upon the ancient history of Egypt. The dynasty which Joseph served, and upon whose stability depended the well-being, and even the lives of the people, was that of the shepherd-kings, who had originally entered as conquerors of the country. By the transference of the population to distant cities those monarchs were surrounded, as it were, by a new race, which felt that it owed its life to their beneficent care, and that henceforth held the land directly from them. Old political associations, and with them the power of the old nobility, were brought to an end; and intrigues on behalf of the descendants of the older Pharaoh's were henceforth made difficult, if not impossible. It was the most complete, bloodless, and beneficent revolution recorded in history.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRITICS AND THE JOSEPH HISTORY.

THE future historian of that species of rationalism, denominated "the higher criticism," will find abundant material for the amusement of his readers. So evident is it (as has been already mentioned) that in the history of Joseph we have to

do with one author only, that certain critics have seriously protested against its being broken up into fragments. But the necessity for consistency is the Nemesis of error. And so the critic is bound here also by what he has declared to be the special and inalienable characteristics of E and J, &c. It was found to be a special feature, for instance, of the E document that it records dreams. Why this should be concluded to be the exclusive work of any one ancient historian, seeing that all of them were believers in dreams, it would be hard to say. Such, however, is the critical "discovery"; and an announcement of this kind is tacitly accepted as rendering questioning an insult, and discussion an impertinence. According, therefore, to this "law," the dreams of Joseph, and those of Pharaoh's chief butler and baker, announce the presence of E. To E the accounts of the dreams are consequently assigned; and, in the Polychrome Bible, the brush, with the appropriate tint, is at once and firmly applied.

Now, if we grant that every record of a dream is the exclusive property of E, we can make no demur when those portions of the Joseph-history are assigned to this Elohist or Ephraimitic writer. But what are we to think when, after those parts have been torn away for this reason—or upon this pretence—we are coolly told that there was a parallel account by J *in which the dreams also appeared*? If J chronicled dreams, how can that practice be any longer believed to be a peculiarity of E? And if J

does share it with E, how comes it that critics can still palm off the statement upon their readers that E alone relates dreams?

But, as usual, the greatest efforts are made to show that the account, as we now have it, is inconsistent with itself; and that it must, therefore, be regarded and be dealt with as a compilation made up from documents by different writers. It is well that the reader should be made fully acquainted with these so-called contradictions. There is nothing that will so demonstrate to him how utterly this pretentious system is lacking, not only in sobriety, but also in truth. Dr. Driver presents the whole array * in his commentary. He says: "The history of Joseph must have been told at length in J and E alike, in substantially the same form in both"—a notable admission—"but with occasional variations in details; and the method mostly followed by the compiler, especially in chapters xxxix.—xlv., has been to except long passages from J and E alternately, and at the same time to incorporate in each short traits embodying traits derived from the other." Has the reader ever heard of literary art like that? We can imagine a man taking *one* document and incorporating in it extracts from another, or from others. But that he should now make one his main document and cull additions from another; and then, after a few sentences, make this second his main document and take snatches from the first; then change again for a few sentences; and, after that, change once more; and so

* *Genesis*, pp. 332, 333.

on, is utterly impossible and inconceivable. That any writer should print such a hypothesis shows how far the intoxication of theories has dulled within him the appreciation of reality and of possibility.

The following are the alleged inconsistencies:

1. The Ishmaelites sell Joseph "to an Egyptian of position whose name is not given (xxxix. 1)." A second account says he was sold "to Potiphar, captain of the guard."

2. The Egyptian makes Joseph his head servant (xxxix. 4); after the charge brought against him by his master's wife he is thrown into a prison bearing the peculiar name of the Round (?) House (xxxix. 20); and the keeper of the prison makes him overseer of the other prisoners. The second account says that Potiphar "appoints him (xl. 4) to *wait on** the prisoners confined in his house."

3. "The brethren tell Joseph about their younger brother only in answer to his inquiry (xliii. 7, xliv. 19);" according to the other account, "the brethren, when taxed with being spies, *volunteer* the information about their younger brother (xlii. 13, 32)."

4. "Nothing is said about Simeon being detained as a hostage in Egypt;" in the second account "Simeon is left in Egypt as a hostage."

5. "The brethren open their sacks and discover the money in them at the lodging-house by the way;" the other account says "the brethren open their sacks at the *end* of their journey home."

6. "Judah offers to be surety to his father for

* The Italics are Dr. Driver's.

Benjamin's return ;" "*Reuben* offers to be surety for Benjamin's return."

7. "Goshen is named as the district allotted to Jacob and his sons ;" "there is no mention of Goshen" (in the alleged second account).

Such, with the exception of matter already dealt with, is a full representation of the critical case for the rending of this seamless garment. It will be seen that in Number 1 the critics make a bad beginning. They tell us that in the first versé of chapter xxxix. there is no mention of Potiphar, and that we are merely told that Joseph's master was an Egyptian of position. The reader peruses this portion of Scripture with amazement. What! he exclaims, no mention of Potiphar in xxxix. 1! What, then, is this: "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him," &c.? Dr. Driver hastens to explain. The words, "Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard," were added, he says, by the Redactor, or Editor. And what, pray, led the critics to this extraordinary conclusion? Here is the answer: "If the name and description of Joseph's master," writes Dr. Driver, "originally stood here, the addition, 'an Egyptian,' seems superfluous." * And so, upon that basis, and upon that basis alone, rests this foolhardy alteration of the Word of God. Knobel had penetration enough to see that the expression, "an Egyptian," might have a special import, and so be by no means

* *Genesis*, p. 333.

"superfluous." We now know how fully Knobel's surmise has been justified. Joseph served a foreign dynasty; and, in ordinary circumstances, an Egyptian would have been the last man to have been placed in command of the body-guard of the king. But this was evidently a man of capacity, and of proved fidelity; and all this, with its usual suggestive brevity, the Scripture conveys to us in that phrase, "an Egyptian." When this is seen, the utter folly of the critical position is manifest. "An Egyptian," implies that these other words were also in the text: "Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard." For, unless we knew this man's position, and the great confidence reposed in him, "an Egyptian" would tell us nothing. With the text as it has always stood, we mark at once the goodness of God in sending Joseph to the home of a man of sterling honour, and whose uprightness and devotion banished scruple and suspicion.

2. With this dismal failure, the contention for differing documents in this part of Genesis ends; but let us glance at the rest of Dr. Driver's array of shadows. A reference to Number 2 will remind the reader that the alleged discrepancy depends upon the supposed difference between the "Egyptian" and Potiphar; and now that it is proved that these are one and the same individual, every pretence of discrepancy disappears. The consistency of the history is most conspicuous. Joseph, committed by Potiphar to prison, through his zeal, fidelity and ability, rises there, as he had risen in the home. This

was, of course, not unknown to the Captain of the Guard; and, therefore, when those two great Court officials were committed to the custody of Potiphar, he naturally interested himself in making special provision for their security and their comfort, and so "charged Joseph with them, and he served them" (xl. 4). In other words, Joseph was set apart for this duty. It was a welcome gleam of sunshine to God's afflicted servant, and no doubt he "thanked God and took courage."

3. Joseph's brethren speak of Benjamin only when Joseph first asks about him (xliii. 7; xlv. 19); but in xlii. 13, 32, when taxed with being spies, they themselves *volunteer* the information that they have a younger brother. The references to Benjamin, read in their order, are as follows: "And he (Joseph) said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not" (xlii. 12, 13). "And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying, The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies: we be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan" (verses 29-32). Here everything is in perfect agreement. The report made by the returned sons to Jacob is a minutely faithful

account of what occurred between Joseph and themselves. Now all this information in chapters xliii. and xliv., in the supposed other account, is stated to have been "volunteered," just as we are told in xlii., that it was. For we read: "And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?" (xliii. 6). Then we are told that "They said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye yet another brother?" (xliii. 6, 7). And so in the narrative of their after interview with Joseph we read: "Then Judah came near unto him (Joseph), and said, O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears. . . . My Lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?" (xliv. 18, 19).

Here the first two statements to Joseph and to Jacob are at one, and so also are the last two. But no capable reader of documents would ever dream of regarding the first two as contradictory of, or inconsistent with, the second. The second set, on the contrary, afford us additional information. The interview with the Egyptian ruler was by no means a brief and perfunctory one. It was a long and harassing examination of these men. Having led them to give the information, which is mentioned in the first two passages, Joseph fastened, for obvious reasons, upon their statements regarding their father and their younger brother. We can well believe that questions direct and imperious were asked as to whether they stood to those statements. That there

must have been a rigid examination into them is plain from the final judgment that their justification would rest upon the production of their youngest brother. It was perfectly natural that Jacob, on the one hand, should be reminded of this rigid examination when it was necessary to obtain his consent to Benjamin's travelling with them on their second expedition to Egypt; and that, on the other hand, the circumstance should be recalled to Joseph's mind when Judah pleads that Benjamin may be permitted to return to his father.

4. "Nothing is said about Simeon being detained as a hostage in Egypt"; "Simeon is detained in Egypt as a hostage." The vagueness of this is imposing. Let me assist Dr. Driver with an explanation. We are told in xlii. 19 that Joseph modifies his former judgment, and that now, instead of one being sent back to Canaan and nine imprisoned, he decrees that one shall be left in prison and that the nine shall be sent back to Canaan with provision for their households. In verse 24 it is said that Simeon was selected and bound before their eyes. But in xliii. 3-10, Judah, while pleading with Jacob to consent to Benjamin's going with them, makes no mention of Simeon's imprisonment. But why should he have spoken of that? The very suggestion shows what a poor substitute a modern critic would have been for the Jewish patriarch. Was it to be suggested to Jacob that Benjamin's liberty was to be bartered for Simeon's? Would that have helped Judah's plea? And would it have been relevant to

the matter in hand? What are they going down for? To deliver Simeon? No; they are going to Egypt to procure bread that they and their children may be kept alive in those terrible days of famine; and, for this end, Benjamin's presence with them is now absolutely essential.

This explanation would be thoroughly satisfactory even if the facts were as Dr. Driver asserts they are. But the facts are not so. We are here confronted with one of those deliberate falsifications of testimony in which Dr. Driver and his friends have bartered their honour for the temporary triumph of their cause. In xliii. 14—in the midst of the so-called J narrative—the words of Jacob are: "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away YOUR OTHER BROTHER and Benjamin." Here there is a distinct reference to Simeon's detention! So again in verse 23—in the very heart of this so-called J document—we learn that Joseph "brought Simeon out unto them." Here, then, J is as well-informed as E in regard to Simeon's imprisonment. The reader doubtless asks, in amazement, whether Dr. Driver knew of the existence of these passages. Certainly, he and the rest knew of them; but, *simply and solely because they conflicted with their theory*, these passages were struck out, one of them being assigned to E and the other being put upon the shoulders of the Redactor; and, having thus tampered with the documents, Dr. Driver informs the British reader that J knows nothing of Simeon's imprisonment! Where pro-

prietary rights have been involved, tactics of that kind have consigned men of position and previous respectability to penal servitude. They are not less disgraceful, nor in the sight of God less criminal, when employed to break men's faith in the Law of the Lord.

5. "According to J . . . the brethren open their sacks and discover the money in them at the lodging-place by the way. . . . According to E the brethren open their sacks at the *end* of the journey home." The effrontery of this beggars description. Here are two verses in the midst of the section assigned to E: "And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?" (xlii. 27, 28). E, therefore, who knows nothing of finding the money at the lodging-place is the very writer who tells of the discovery that was made there! Need I inform the reader that the documents are tampered with again, and that those two verses are cut out and given to J? Such is indeed the fact: but in this instance Dr. Driver feels himself compelled to make some defence. He adds the following foot-note: "The conclusion, that verses 27, 28 are from J, is confirmed by two independent indications: (1) 'one of them' is literally 'the one' (implying others to follow. J's full account of what happened at the lodging-place is evidently not given);

(2) 'sack' in verses 27, 28 is a peculiar word, *amtâ-hath*." This word, he contends, belongs to J only.

Now it will be plain even to the English reader that there is nothing in the first of these two reasons. "The one" of verse 27 certainly implies that he is the first of many who are to have that experience; but it points on to the statement in verse 35: "And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack." Before dealing with (2) let me say a word on another apologetic statement in his commentary. He says that, according to E, "provision for the way was given separately (verse 25)." Here the English reader is left to infer that, when Joseph commanded to give them provision for the way, this included corn for the beasts so that no purchased sack of corn required to be opened by the way in order to feed them. Why does he not explain that *tsêdah*, the word here used, does not mean corn, that is, food for beasts, but *food for men*? It is applied in Psalm lxxviii. 25 to the manna furnished for the Israelites: "Man did eat angel's food."

Let us now come to (2). *Amtâhath* is said to be the word for bag used by J, while E uses *sak* for the same convenient article. Be it so. Remember, now, that *on the ground of that distinction* Dr. Driver asks the defenceless English reader—defenceless because he is supposed to have no knowledge of Hebrew—to believe that the critics are on this ground justified in saying that the twenty-seventh verse is J's, and cannot be E's. I repeat, let this be

borne in mind; and now let the reader mark what follows. At the very commencement of this verse—which cannot be E's, says Dr. Driver, because it uses J's word for bag and not E's—we find *sak*, E's word for bag! The words are: "And the one of them opened his sack (*sak*) . . he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's (*amtâhath*) mouth." Why did Dr. Driver conceal that fact? Is it not time that men who value honour should wash their hands of this degrading thing? There is another reason also why verse 28 must, *according to the critics' own ruling*, be E's and cannot be J's. It is the presence of the word God (Elohim): "What is this that God hath done unto us?" To use Elohim as the Divine name is E's great distinguishing characteristic. It is impossible, therefore, to give verse 28 to J. On that fact it need not surprise us that Dr. Driver prudently preserves silence.

6. Judah and Reuben both offer to be surety for Benjamin's return. And why should not both do so? That Reuben's offer is disregarded cannot surprise us when we remember his unstable character. Judah's offer becomes a necessity, for the simple reason that Reuben's has had no result.

7. There is no mention of Goshen in E. It is named only in J. This is an admission, and not an argument. If these *were* separate accounts we might certainly expect Goshen to be mentioned in both. In dealing with one document, on the other hand, it does not trouble us that Goshen is mentioned in one part and not in another.

How marvellously full a confirmation of the Joseph-history has been furnished by Egyptology is shown in *The New Biblical Guide*, vol. ii., p. 297—vol. iii., p. 94.

CONCLUSION OF THE GENERATIONS OF JACOB.

XLVIII.—L.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONTENTS.

THE end foreshadowed in Chapter xlvii. was about to come. The time had arrived when Jacob was to die. So soon as the patriarch was laid down in what was plainly his last sickness, tidings were sent off to Joseph. The Egyptian viceroy at once set out for Goshen, taking with him his two sons. When Jacob heard of their coming, "he strengthened himself, and sat up upon the bed" (xlvi. 2). After a reference to the covenant which God had made with him at Bethel, in which the Divine assurance was given that he should be the father of a multitude of people, and that the land would be given to his seed as an everlasting possession (3, 4), Jacob proceeds to bestow a double portion upon Joseph. He tells him that he adopts Manasseh and Ephraim as his own sons, and thus insures that Joseph shall be represented by two of the leading tribes of Israel. Joseph's sons, evidently standing in the background at the commencement of the interview, attract Jacob's attention. His eyes are dim with age; and, though he sees the forms, he cannot discern the

features. He inquires of Joseph who they are, and when he is told that they are Joseph's sons of whom he himself has just spoken, he asks that they be brought to him. After an affectionate greeting, the installation is forthwith proceeded with. And now an incident occurs which casts light upon the nature of these blessings. They were not mere human good wishes. They were prophecies. Joseph had placed Manasseh the elder at his father's right hand, and Ephraim the younger at his left hand. But Jacob, "guiding his hands wittingly," crossed them, and laid the right hand upon the head of Ephraim, and the left upon that of Manasseh. When Joseph, wishful to repair what seemed to him a regrettable mistake, interfered and held up his father's right hand from Ephraim's head, "his father refused and said, I know it my son, I know it: he (Manasseh) also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations" (5-20). That discrimination between the two tribes was predictive. The impulse under which Jacob acted and spoke was due to One to whom the destinies of these two tribes were fully known. In other words, the patriarch, like the other prophets, "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21).

In Chapter xlix., we have a still fuller display of this Divine foresight. After the interview with Joseph and his children, Jacob summoned the rest of his sons. And here the claim to prediction is distinctly

advanced. "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you of that which shall befall you in the last days" (xlix. 1). These latter words are literally: "the end of the days." The phrase occurs in later Scriptures with special reference to the times of the Messiah—and not only to His first, but also to His second, Coming. The predictions which follow may not all refer to those times; but it is undoubted that, while some of the predictions may be fulfilled by the way, the great event towards which the patriarch is looking is that to which the Scripture has pointed from the first—the day of retribution and of full and lasting salvation for this sinful and sorrowing earth.

Now, as we shall see immediately, the higher criticism, like its elder sisters, deism and rationalism, maintains that here we have no prophesy whatever; that the sayings are, indeed, thrown into prophetic form; but that they were all made after, and not before, the events which they seem to foretell. How necessary it is for every system that would exclude miracle from the Scripture to assert, and to attempt to prove, that prophecy is a forgery, I need not say. One clear and undeniable prediction would shatter their dogma that "miracles do not happen." But it is utterly impossible to assign any *later* date to these words than the fourth century B.C. Who was able, however, to foresee, four hundred years before Christ came, that Israel would subsist as a distinct people until "the end of the days"? That is a question important enough to command discussion and some

worthy solution. The claim is clear—no words could make it clearer—that Israel shall not pass away—that it shall not merge into, and be lost among, the other nationalities of the earth, but shall still be a separate people in “the end of the days.”

Attempts have been made to explain Jacob's predictions by certain events in the history of the tribes. The words of verse 16, for example, have been thought to refer to the career of Samson, when, indeed, in his person Dan did “judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.” But where in the past history of Israel shall we find the accomplishment of the prophecy (verse 17): “Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels so that the rider shall fall backward”? And why, above all, should the patriarch then and there exclaim: “I have waited for Thy salvation, O Jehovah” (verse 18)? Similar difficulty is experienced in the attempt to discover fulfilments of most of the other allusions. But is not that attempt an ignoring of the distinct intimation given in the commencement of the prophecy? If the Scripture warns us that these are things which will befall the tribes in “the end of the days,” why should we try to show that the predictions were fulfilled *before* “the end of the days”?

The tribal distinctions have long since passed from the knowledge of Israel. The loss of these may be another indication of God's controversy with His ancient people. But the genealogies, so long lost, may yet be recovered. There have been

discoveries in these last times of so astonishing a character, that no one can set down the recovery of the old tribal relationships as an impossibility. And should they by-and-bye be regained, few things could indicate more clearly that God was once more to deal in mercy with Israel. In that case, the final settlements and fortunes of the tribes would bind the end to the beginning; and the blessing of Jacob, in its testimony to the foreknowledge and the faithfulness of God, would lay a consecrating hand upon God's redeemed people.

The cry: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Jehovah," and the prophecy of Shiloh (verse 10), to which we shall afterwards return, show that Jacob is, indeed, looking on to the last things. And very little reflection is required to see that the patriarch, with the fathers of the new race gathered round his couch, and dealing with the destiny of this selected people, could not have turned away his eyes from that great millennial future which awaits the purged people. The day of God's glory will also be that of Israel's triumph.

When the blessings had been uttered, and Jacob had displayed to his sons the portion of the latter day, he gave them a commandment regarding his burial. "And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite." Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were buried there (29-31), and there also would Jacob have his body rest till "the end of the

days." "And when he had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people" (33). "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him" (1. 1). And his love did more. Jacob was honoured with a princely burial. The body was embalmed with a view to the distant journey, and permission was sought from Pharaoh for Joseph to go up with his father's body to Canaan. "And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. And they came to Goren-Atad" (the threshing-floor of thorns), "which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation" (7-11). This seems to shed light upon the date of Genesis. Goren-Atad, afterwards called Abel-Mizraim (the mourning of the Egyptians), was identified by Jerome with Beth-Hoglah between Jericho and the Jordan. If this is correct, then Genesis was composed by Moses when he was on the East of Jordan, that is, in the last days of his life. It would appear that as soon as Joseph and his great company had entered the promised land, the death of Jacob, its Divinely-ordained possessor, was bewailed afresh.

It was entirely natural that, after the return, Joseph's brethren, now bereft of him for whose sake Joseph had gladly protected and served them all, should fear a change in their brother's attitude. It seems that Jacob also (verses 16, 17) regarded a change in Joseph's relationship to his brethren as a possibility, and had given them counsel as to what they ought to do after his death. It was to frankly confess their sin, and to throw themselves upon Joseph's compassion. This they now did. They sent a messenger acknowledging their transgression, and entreating his forgiveness; "and Joseph wept when they spake unto him" (verse 17). But, not content with sending a representative, "his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold we be thy servants" (18). Joseph's reply was balm to broken hearts. The Book ends with Joseph's taking an oath of his brethren that his embalmed body shall not be left in Egypt, when God opens up their way for return to Canaan. Thus, even in death, he held up before Israel the Divine promise, and testified to the Divine faithfulness.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHECY REGARDING "SHILOH."

THE words, which above all others in Jacob's prophecy attract our attention, are these concerning Judah:

"Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise! Thy

hand (shall be) in the neck of thine enemies; shall bow down to thee the sons of thy father. A lions whelp (is) Judah: from the prey, my son, thou hast gone up. He has bowed down, he has reclined as a lion and as a (strong) lion. Who will rouse him? A staff (or sceptre) shall not depart from Judah, nor an issuer of decrees from between his feet until Shiloh shall come, and to Him shall be the willing obedience of the peoples. Binding a swift young ass to the vine branch, and to the noble vine the son of his she-ass, he washed in wine his splendid garments, and in the blood of grape-clusters his apparel. Both his eyes (are) flashing with wine, and his teeth (are) white with milk" (8-12).

The above is a literal translation of this important passage. It begins with a description of Judah, whose descendants are evidently to become the leading—and, indeed, the sovereign—tribe of Israel. Then the time is set for the coming of "Shiloh." When He will appear the staff of commandership, the sovereign sceptre shall pass from the hand of Judah, and the right to issue laws shall cease among his descendants. "Shiloh," however, shall not only recover, but shall increase, the glory of the tribe; for it seems plain that "Shiloh" is specially associated with Judah. But for the leadership of the tribes that was lost, shall now be substituted a leadership of nations. To whom, however, does the closing portion of the description

refer? Is it Judah or Shiloh who shall wash his splendid garments in wine and his apparel in the blood of grape-clusters? The Targums (the Jewish paraphrases) not only understand "Shiloh" to be the Messiah, but also apply the latter part of the description to Him. Thus the Targum of Onkelos says: "He who exercises dominion shall not pass away from the house of Jehuda, nor the saphra from his children's children for ever, until the Messiah come, whose is the kingdom, and unto whom shall be the obedience of the nations. Israel shall pass round about in his cities; the people shall build his temple; they will be righteous round about him, and be doers of the law through his doctrine. Of goodly purple will be his raiment, and his vesture of crimson wool with colours. His mountains shall be red with vineyards, and his hills be dropping with wine; his valleys shall be white with corn, and with flocks of sheep."

The latter part of this quotation might be understood as referring to the tribe, rather than to the Messiah. But there is no doubt whatever clinging to the interpretation of the Targum of Palestine. The reference there is as follows: "Kings shall not cease, nor rulers, from the house of Jehuda, nor Sapherin, teaching the law, from his seed, till the time that the King, the Meshiha, shall come, the youngest of his sons; and on account of him shall the peoples flow together. How beauteous is the King, the Meshiha, who shall arise from the house of Jehuda! He hath girded his loins, and descended, and arrayed the battle against his adversaries, slaying kings with

their rulers; neither is there any king or ruler who shall stand before him. The mountains become red with the blood of their slain; his garments, dipped in blood, are like the outpressed juice of grapes. How beautiful are the eyes of the King Meshiha, as the pure wine! He cannot look upon what is unclean, nor on the shedding of the blood of the innocent; and his teeth, purer than milk, cannot eat that which is stolen or torn; and therefore his mountains are red with wine, and his hills white with corn, and with the cotes of flocks."

The Jerusalem Targum repeats the above with the alteration of a phrase or two. It is enough to quote the following sentences. ". . . . Until the time that the King Meshiha shall come, whose is is the kingdom, and to whom all the kingdoms of the earth shall be obedient. How beauteous is the King Meshiha, who is to arise from the house of Jehuda! Binding his loins, and going forth to war against them that hate him, he will slay kings with princes, and make the rivers red with the blood of their slain, and his hills white with the fat of their mighty ones: his garments will be dipped in blood, and he himself be like the juice of the winepress," etc. Here, as in the former Targum, the whole of the latter part of the prophecy is applied to "Shiloh." Recent interpreters understand the binding of the "swift young ass to the vine-branch," etc., as indicating that Judah's territory will be so exceedingly fruitful that it will be a matter of no moment to endanger the finest vines. But the image seems

to fall in more readily with the Jewish interpretation, which is also founded upon other predictions of the Scripture. It seems to set forth a time when the most precious things are disregarded, and even subjected to violence, and when the Redeemer shall purge the earth and make an end of wrong by letting loose the long-restrained judgments of the Almighty. It is thus, and only thus, as all the prophets have declared, that sin shall end, and lasting peace be reached.

Until 1698, when Le Clere published his rationalistic interpretation, Jewish and Christian interpreters had been unanimous in their opinion that "Shiloh" meant the Messiah. True to their determination to banish the miracle of prophecy from the Scripture, the higher criticism follows Le Clere and his school. The attempt to escape from the prophecy has assumed various forms. A much-favoured one has been to translate "until they come to Shiloh," or "until he (Judah) come to Shiloh." Understood in this way, the words would mean that Judah would have the pre-eminence among the tribes until the final partition of the land at Shiloh. And it is suggested that the alleged prediction was then accomplished in the separation of the tribes (the families of Israel passing to their allotments), and the ending of Judah's privilege of marching in the van of the tribes! That suggestion may be left without comment. Judah had really no leadership in Israel before the partition of the land at Shiloh. Neither Moses nor Joshua were of that tribe.

Another suggested translation was : " As long as one (of the people) assemble at Shiloh." But Shiloh was already deserted when Judah's pre-eminence began with the sovereignty of David.

The name, however, seems to have created considerable difficulty, even for the Jews ; and a reading, found in some twenty-two manuscripts, has met with much favour. It is *shello* instead of *Shiloh*, and the word is taken to mean " He whose it is." The battle has raged round each of these suggestions, with the result that none of them has afforded a refuge for the distressed critics. Dr. Driver's note, that this is " a very difficult and uncertain clause," is suggestive. He himself translates " Until Shiloh come." In a special excursus upon the passage, however, in the end of his book,* he returns to the attack. He argues : " If the word be a personal name, and a title of the Messiah, it must be significant : but from ' Shiloh ' no meaning suitable for such a purpose can be extracted ; it cannot, for instance, mean *peaceful*, or *peace-bringer*," etc. But Dr. Driver cannot claim higher authority as a Hebraist than those who have entirely set aside this contention. Hofmann has said : " No objection can really be sustained against thus regarding it as a personal name, in closest analogy to *Shēlomoh*." Keil has shown that the word belongs to a class which ended with *n*, the original form of *Shiloh* having been *Shilōn*. This ending in *n* is dropped in *proper names* ; and thus we have Shiloh here because it is a personal name.

* *Genesis*, pp. 410-415.

Much, again, has been said about "Shiloh" having been the name of a town in Ephraim. That very fact, however, brings with it a welcome suggestion. The town was either so named by the Israelites, or the name was borne by it previously, and accepted by them as one which was fully in harmony with the events, the memory of which the city was ever afterwards to be associated with the place. What were those events? Not only did the Ark of Jehovah obtain there a resting-place, but it also found there a cessation of its wandering, because the conquest was complete. "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them." There, too, the remaining tribes received their inheritance, and the two and a-half tribes who had left their wives and families on the East of the Jordan were permitted to return to their homes. That place was associated, therefore, with *the giving of rest* not only to the Tabernacle of God, but also to Israel. The personal "Shiloh" is, therefore, the Rest-Giver, a name prophetically significant of the blessing which men find in Christ now, and which the world shall more abundantly receive hereafter. It may be added that, in Jacob's prophecy, the context makes it impossible to deny a personal sense to the words. We are told that the supremacy in Israel will not pass away from Judah "until Shiloh shall come, and to HIM shall be the willing obedience of the peoples." These words, "and to Him," impose a personal sense

upon the term Shiloh with a decisiveness which no grammatical subtleties can conceal or diminish.

But there is a question behind all these, and one which towers above them all. Is this a prophecy, or is it not? If it is a distinct announcement, not only of events which we recognise, but which are also among the most marvellous and unexpected in all history, then all this gainsaying subsides like a passing dust-storm. It is really against the admission, and even the recognition, of this that the entire critical attack is directed. The very conception, that such a thing could be contained in the words before us, is openly and decisively set aside as an utter impossibility. Binding up Jacob's blessing of his sons with that of Moses in Deuteronomy xxxiii., and with those of Balaam, Noah, and of Isaac, Gunkel places them all among the alleged impostures of the Old Testament. "All those pieces," he says, "have a poetic form, and are pseudonymous." That is, they have been falsely ascribed to the men whose names have so long been associated with them! "They are descriptions," he continues, "of the time of the author from the mouth of a primeval father—prophecies after the event by poets."*

Dr. Driver seems, at first glance, to dissociate himself from this sweeping assertion as to the impossibility of prophecy. The English critical school, far as it has led its followers, is quite aware that an unwise avowal might scatter their following to the winds. Other tactics are consequently a necessity

* *Genesis*, S. 418.

for the present; and so the English reader of the new criticism must be led by a circuitous path to what is essentially Gunkel's position. "The clause, viewed in relation to its context," writes Dr. Driver, "does seem to have a Messianic thought The verse, in either case, will then promise that the sovereignty will not depart from Judah, till it is merged in the higher, more perfect sovereignty to be exercised by its ideal ruler, the Messiah." This seems to be satisfactory in the extreme! But listen! The above is merely the prelude to the following: "Such a reference to the Messiah seems however to presuppose the teaching of Isaiah, and other prophets; and it must remain an open question whether verse 10 is not a comparatively late addition to the original blessing, added for the purpose of introducing into it the prophetic thought of the future rule of the ideal king."*

Here, therefore, just as the reader experiences a glow of satisfaction over what appears to be a genuine critical concession, the whole turns in his hand to dust. "The Scripture of truth" is set aside as a thing which has been so interpolated, and patched, and altered, that no one can rely upon finding in it one honest word! And this stupendous accusation, by the skilful suggestion of which Dr. Driver seeks to nullify the testimony of miracle, has absolutely not one solid particle for a foundation. One indication of this is found in Gunkel's treatment of the above suggestion which is adopted by

* *Genesis*, p. 386.

Dr. Driver. He says: "Modern investigators (Wellhausen; Stade) would banish the verse as an interpolation, because it breaks the connection; but there is not an instance of closer connection in the entire section."* Such is Gunkel's emphatic repudiation of an unfounded opinion. And when does Dr. Driver imagine that the interpolation was made? If it was introduced after the time of Isaiah and of subsequent prophets, how are we to explain its presence in the Samaritan Pentateuch, a book whose origin cannot reasonably be assigned to a later period than the seventh century B.C.? The facts, too, (1) that there is not the slightest trace that the words were ever wanting from the passage, and (2) that, as Gunkel points out, their presence is demanded by the context, stamp the suggestion as an effort of despair.

Let us now read the prediction for ourselves: (1) Judah, a tribe that shall be marked by courage and warlike prowess, shall attain the leadership of the tribes. This part of the prediction was literally accomplished in the work and the sovereignty of the truly regal David, who, under God, gave Israel a position such as it had never known save in the days of Joshua. (2) This pre-eminence of Judah is to be long-continued. Such is the plain indication of the words—"A staff (or sceptre, symbol of command) shall not depart from Judah, nor an issuer of decrees (for Israel) from between his feet until" . . . The pre-eminence and legislative control were thus to be

* *Gesenius*, S. 424.

long-enduring. This also was literally fulfilled in the dynasty of David. One dynasty succeeded another upon the throne of the ten tribes; but no change was suffered to interfere even once with the succession of the house of David in Judah. The supremacy, too, was preserved for Judah on the return from the captivity, although the sovereignty was not restored to the house of David. It was Jerusalem, the capital of Judah, which became the centre of the land and the centre of Jewish authority. The nobles of Judah were the rulers of the country; and that very name—"the people of the Jews"—shows how the broken tribes gathered round the lion-like leader.

But (3) when Shiloh should come, there was to be a change. The traditional pre-eminence of Judah was then to terminate. Judah was no longer to be the centre of the tribes, their ruler, and the issuer of their decrees. I do not know that the completeness of the fulfilment of this part of the prediction has been so largely recognised as it might have been. What happened forty years after the crucifixion of Christ? The Jewish people was a mass of fugitives, of captives, and of exiles. Their leaders were annihilated. The distinction of the tribes was lost; and the commingled multitudes have had no secure and lasting dwelling-place from that day to this. There has been no central control of any sort whatever over this long-afflicted and despised people. There could not by any possibility have been so utter a cessation of leadership, along with a continuance of

the tribe and of the people, as this which resulted from the Roman invasion and the conquest of Judea. Note, too, that it followed upon the coming of "Shiloh," and that it has endured without a break up to the present hour.

And (4), while the leadership of the tribes was to pass from Judah, nations were to gather round the "Shiloh." The period of Judah's degradation was to be that of the glorifying of "Shiloh." Need I say how this also has been fulfilled? Unto Him has been "the willing obedience of the peoples." Bithynia, according to the statement of Pliny, the younger, had almost wholly ceased to worship the ancient gods and had turned to the Christ in less than a century from the crucifixion of Jesus. The movement spread. The rulers stormed. A bitter and relentless persecution let loose the terrors of fire and sword. But nothing was able to prevent the accomplishment of this prophecy. "The willing obedience of the peoples" has been the earth's tribute to Him Who gave Himself to save it. The movement has continued: it proceeds to-day. One people after another has laid that tribute at His feet: they are bringing it now.

I say nothing of what the future has in store, and of the fuller glory of the "Shiloh" that is yet to come. I ask the reader merely to mark these four facts. (1) Judah did attain the sovereignty of Israel in David; (2) that supremacy continued until the coming of our Lord; (3) after the crucifixion of Jesus it ceased utterly; and (4) since then the

peoples of the earth have brought a "willing obedience" to the Crucified. These confirmations take us down to times when we know that no alteration of the text was possible. The words stood in Genesis, as we have them now, at least centuries before Christ came. Will any man attempt to account for the successive and exact fulfilment of each of these four predictions? And is any explanation possible, short of this, that those words were spoken and recorded by the inspiration of the Spirit of God?

CONCLUSION.

DR. GREEN, of Princeton, whose magnificent work, *The Unity of the Book of Genesis*, has never had a reply, sums up his contribution to this controversy in these words: "The argument is now finished. May it not be truly said that the demonstration is complete? The grounds, upon which the existence of documents in Genesis is rested, have been severally examined and shown to be invalid. The alleged repetitions and discrepancies vanish upon examination, being created by the critics themselves, and due either to misinterpretation or the identification of distinct events."* But, in addition to these and to other matters which he also mentions, there

*Page 571.

is the analysis of the Book which we have now completed. It is manifestly and unquestionably the work of one hand from the commencement to the close. It is composed of a series of genealogies—a plan which gives the Book a unique place even in the Bible. There is not another, in the Old Testament or in the New, which is so arranged. So far, too, as I am aware, it is equally unparalleled in the world's entire literature. That one characteristic is in itself sufficient to kill the theory of documents. Then these genealogies take us along one direct line; and that line leads us on from Eden to Bethel and to Calvary—from the Fall to the Cross. Beginning with the origin of all things and of the nations, it ends with the family of Jacob, showing us in type, as it had formerly announced in distinct prediction, Him Who, springing from the seed of Jacob, shall be Saviour first of the Gentile and then of the Jew. It begins as the Book for humanity; and it ends with the race from which the Healer for humanity is to spring. The line, therefore, along which Genesis leads us, is one which could have been taken only by Divine foreknowledge; and the Book bears that seal, therefore, which sets it among "the oracles of God."

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